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THE ARYAN PATH

Point out the "Way"—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness.

—The Voice of the Silence

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"THUS HAVE I HEARD"—

All men desire security. Safety first in all things. The UNO Security Council is more a symbol than a reality, and neither Member States nor their nationals feel quite secure. Even the rich and powerful U.S.A. would like security against probable Soviet attacks; and so also does Moscow feel uncertain of Washington D.C. Everyone cries, "Give us security." Whence will it emerge?

A materialistic philosophy wedded to a false psychology has boosted insurance business in our civilization ruled by finance. In the spheres of economics and politics the term insurance acts as a spur to find security and as a bait for safety. Not only is life insured against the certain event of death but we have accident insurance. Our houses are protected by fire insurance and our goods on sea by marine insurance. Our motor-cars are insured and so on. But some of our readers may not know that there is in vogue "Business Interruption Insurance" against "loss of net profits and continuing fixed charges during a period of total or partial suspension of activity resulting from damage to or destruction of building, equipment," etc. And did you know of "Fidelity Insurance"? "Insuring against loss arising from the default or dishonesty of employees, or from failure to perform a contract"! Even a cursory study of insurance business principles reveals the passion of the modern civilized man for "immunizing" himself against risks of any kind. Insurance companies and agents devise insurability and supply the demand of those who desire to be insured against destruction, decay and death. And yet people die, accidents occur, contracts are broken, defaults take place and dishonest employees flourish! No insurance gives real satisfaction to any one, and the insured life ebbs away equally with the uninsured life.

And yet—is there a man with his Divine Intuition so covered up by the tons of the false knowledge of the "educated" or by the gross superstitions of the illiterate, that

he does not feel that, somehow, somewhere there is safety and security, there is a state not touched by destruction, decay, death? Treasures upon earth corrupt, but is there not a state where thieves do not break through and steal? Is there somewhere sure safety and security requiring no insurance policy?

What type of insurance principles are noticeable in Nature? Do we not feel safe—albeit unconsciously to ourselves—in the fact of law and order operating in Nature? Do we need to insure against a loss due to late rising of the sun? The Law and Order of Nature are very different from the Law and Order of a mundane government, however powerful.

Next, is it not something that doubting man can learn from and feel secure in the fact that rain, clean and sweet, falls from above

> Which might be salt and black and bitter. Why
> The soft clouds gather it from off the seas,
> To spread it o'er the pastures by and by.

And yet man, interfering with the working of Nature, deprives himself even of the beneficence of wind and rain. But, however little, when it does fall rain is never black and bitter.

The abundance of Nature, her generosity, her powers to turn forces of evil to lessons which elevate, her compensations which ever create opportunities—these speak of order, harmony, repose, peace, understanding, enlightenment, great power. In Nature's flawless working we feel security. When we are less dependent on mundane man-made laws we become more and more channels of Nature, depending on her, and find that she depends on us. In these days prohibition-legislation does not touch the total abstainer. Clauses of the Penal Code do not disturb the sleep of the man free of thieving propensities. One who has emancipated himself from the superstition of caste customs and habits is not afraid of the legalised abolition of untouchability; he welcomes it. Each man's place on the ladder of evolution is not determined by his struggle for existence and his survival in the great fray; it is marked by his power to carry his life forward in unison with Nature, by a due observance of her laws and a proper respect for her processes. Each man is secure as he lives naturally; his insecurity piles up as he violates Nature's Law of Unity and disregards the principle of interdependence.

Nature does not force man to live in struggle and strife but to grow as the flower grows. Nature offers the necessary resistance of soil to every seed. That resistance is not painful, not death-dealing; it is creative as night is creative of day. There are growing pains, *e.g.*, teething. But there are other types of pain to which human beings have made themselves heir. Man has made for himself these pains, in ignorance, through pride and egotism, through lust and obstinacy. These human

frailties disturb the even tenor of Nature's ways and Nature finds its own device to restore rhythm. Compassionate Nature always makes a response. When man creates for himself unnecessary pain Nature creates reaction. Man sins, Nature recompenses; that compensation is suffering—and people say "What a compensation!" If man would, he could overcome the reaction. Suffering has educative and creative aspects but right knowledge alone can make use of it. Right knowledge is the knowledge of the Laws of Nature.

When the warning of pain is not heeded man's craving compels Nature to create the force of Temptation. This force is a peculiar aspect in the Karmic operations of the Law of Mercy which is Justice.

Wordsworth's "Happy Warrior" through knowledge overcomes temptation:—

> More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
> As tempted more; more able to endure,
> As more exposed to suffering and distress;
> Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.

The mythical Satan goes about the world tempting men, but hoping and praying for his own redemption through man's resistance to his temptations. H. P. Blavatsky has explained :—

> There is one eternal Law in nature, one that always tends to adjust contraries and to produce final harmony. It is owing to this Law of spiritual development superseding the physical and purely intellectual, that mankind will become freed from its false gods, and find itself finally—SELF-REDEEMED.

India's Vice-President, the philosopher-statesman, has exposed the weakness enveloping the UNO. The UNO Security Council will be able to fulfill its mission only when it is able to act up to the principle —Security for each being and in all things. Nature offers universal security, while man demands it for himself, his family, his city, his state, his religion, and so creates insecurity and goes on to invent insurances against his own creations.

There is security. There is safety. Nature does insure us against sin and sorrow. We must pay for our insurance policy in the coin of noble Knowledge, on proper due dates, as nature works in and by cycles. This applies to individuals as to all groups. A united world alone will be secure and increasingly progressive. Under Nature's Law—World Security is the only security available.

SHRAVAKA

SOME CREATIVE IDEAS OF THEOSOPHY

[**Mr. D. L. Murray** is a novelist and a journalist who enhanced the prestige of the famous *Times Literary Supplement* as its Editor from 1938 to 1944. At one time he was the dramatic critic of *The Nation* and *The Athenæum*. He is the author of *Disraeli* and half a dozen novels. His contributions and reviews in our pages have many appreciative readers and we publish the following paper with particular pleasure. It contains the substance, though it has not the form, of an address given at the London Branch of the Indian Institute of Culture on May 8th, 1953. It is appropriate to publish it this month when Madame Blavatsky's birthday falls due.—ED.]

Today is the 63rd anniversary of the passing of Mme. Blavatsky, observed by Theosophists all over the world as "White Lotus Day." Helena Petrovna Blavatsky was in her lifetime much spoken against; it can hardly be said that in the 60-odd years that have passed since she left this earth there has been an end to the attacks upon her. She has had her able defenders as well as her adversaries; but what appears to me to be still lacking is such a large-minded, sympathetic study of her personality as would, while admitting her human frailties, seek objectively to take the measure of her greatness.

Undoubtedly Mme. Blavatsky all her life behaved in unconventional ways. But is it not the case that, if she had been a great painter or sculptress or musician or poetess, posterity, however much it might be interested in her personality, would have judged her by her *work*? We should have been directed to the canvas, the musical score or the book, and told "*That* is the real Mme. Blavatsky!" Surely now the time has come to judge her by her achievements as philosopher, mystic and seer, and not by the shortness of her temper or her excessive smoking or the impish sense of humour that sometimes led her (as I believe) to play practical jokes upon her more simple-minded disciples.

It cannot too often be insisted that Mme. Blavatsky was not the creator of any new-fangled or "fancy" philosophy or religion. Aided, as she firmly believed, by Teachers from beyond the Veil, she offered the Western world a restatement of the hoarded Wisdom of the East, the doctrines handed down from generation to generation in Asia and in Egypt, and developed in their own way by European thinkers from Pythagoras and Plato to Hegel. She was not capable of the absurdity of pretending that it was by her that the teachings of the Hindu and Buddhist religions were first promulgated, or that she invented the ancient mysteries of Egypt. Indeed when her immediate disciple, A. P. Sinnett, put forward one of the earliest statements of Theosophic

belief in his brilliantly written *Esoteric Buddhism* (1883), an Indian scholar wrote to complain that so far from his having brought out anything novel, "there is not a single village or hamlet in the whole of India in which people are not more or less acquainted with the sublime tenets of the Vedanta philosophy which find expression in that volume." No: Mme. Blavatsky would have claimed to be a witness, a specially favoured witness, to those "sublime truths," but never their inventor. "Reject me," she might have said: "you will still have to reckon with the witness of the immemorial East."

But to this truth there is a reverse side. Can any one believe that the Ancient Wisdom, had it remained locked in books written in the Oriental languages or translated by scholars for scholars; had it been observed in its effects only by travellers from Western countries to the Far East, would ever have become more than a subject of difficult study for philosophers and linguists in Europe and America? Not even the fact that some of its ideas had inspired the poets of the Romantic Revival, Wordsworth, Coleridge and others, not even the success of Arnold's popular poem, *The Light of Asia*, could have made it a living faith to multitudes of ordinary people in the West. It was the foundation of the Theosophical Society by Mme. Blavatsky and her helpers that planted the idea of this Wisdom as a way of life and a solution to the riddles of human destiny in the Western world. And this is the first of those *creative ideas* of Theosophy which are the subject of my talk: the discovery of a generally intelligible Western dress for doctrines that had hitherto been the property of small groups of scholars, and of poets who had perhaps been dreaming rather than giving the full allegiance of their minds and souls to the Ancient Wisdom. Mme. Blavatsky did not achieve this solely by her books, which, apart perhaps from *The Key to Theosophy*, are certainly not reading for the man at the twopenny library. It was done by the impact of her personality, of her mystical and psychic gifts, of her organizing genius. Without some such dynamic individual, it is hard to see how it could have been done at all.

There is no more sickly disease to which ideas are subject than the process known as "dating." We look back to theories and creeds that appealed 50 years ago and find them subtly changed. It is not that they now seem definitely false, but that it no longer seems to matter much whether they are false or true. They have become simply *irrelevant* to our problems. Now my contention is that the ideas of Mme. Blavatsky certainly do not "date." Her books may preserve the record of disputes which have now little interest for us; they may reveal traces of scientific and historic speculations current in the 19th century and now generally outgrown.

But her central doctrines are as alive and relevant to our existing situation as they were to the situation amid which she wrote. I say *relevant*; I do not say *generally accepted*; that is another matter. A "dated" idea is one that nobody bothers to deny with any energy. If it is hotly contested, then you can be sure that it at any rate makes a difference still. Let us take one or two instances.

Among the disconcerting features of our time is the resuscitation of Materialism, a philosophy hopelessly discredited 50 years ago. There is, no doubt, a political reason for this. Materialism has come back with the rest of the Victorian *bric-à-brac* of the Marxist creed. There is also to be reckoned the dazzling effect upon the popular imagination of the stupendous recent discoveries of physical science. These things, however, cannot conceal the inherent contradictions of that scheme of thought. Yet there is no doubt that today the battle with Materialism is on again, and we may ask how Theosophy stands in this vital conflict. Assuredly it does not stand on one side; it never has. The Monism for which Theosophy stands repudiates equally the view that the essence of the Universe is mere Matter and the dualism that would cleave the Universe into two spheres, a transcendent Deity, who is spiritual, and a creation that is material, with man distracted by his possession of the two disparate natures, spirit and body. For Theosophy, in Mme. Blavatsky's own words, "visible and solid matter" is simply the "periodical manifestation" of the One Reality, which unites in Itself the principles of Spirit and Matter, and which she terms "*meta*-spirit."[1]

Now, although Mme. Blavatsky was as capable of arguing this thesis dialectically as any philosopher who has ever lived, she knew the world well enough to realize that subtle and sustained intellectual argument could never be the way to convince the mass of humanity, at its present stage of evolution, of any truth whatever. From the first she realized that she must deliver the message she held herself charged by Spiritual Guides to communicate by devoting the whole of her personality, with its wonderful psychic gifts, to the task. Argument may go on about the particular "phenomena" she produced to impress her disciples; what seems clear is that she had the endowments of a *psychic*, and that she gave an immense stimulus to the now wide-spread study of such subjects as clairvoyance, telepathy, telekinesis, E. S. P., the powers to be gained by the discipline of *yoga*, psychical research, and the possibility of communication with other planes of Being. Her approach to the wider world beyond ordinary perception was not simply a matter of reasoning; it was *experimental*, it was pragmatic —and how does that side of her activity look in the light of today?

[1] *The Key to Theosophy* (Theosophy Co. (India) Ltd., 1948), p. 33.

When she began, the world laughed at a woman who seemed to it to be trying to revive exploded superstitions. Now we even find universities where such researches are an endowed subject. I would claim, then, as a second proved "creative idea" of Theosophy its resolve to "investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man."

It is hard for us today to realize a condition of psychology in which the idea of "the unconscious" did not exist or was only vaguely surmised. Yet William James dates from only 1886 "the discovery... that...there is not only the consciousness of the ordinary field," but "an addition thereto in the shape of a set of memories, thoughts and feelings which are extra-marginal and outside of the primary consciousness altogether,"[1] and it was only in 1892 that Frederick Myer's celebrated "Essay on the Subliminal Consciousness" was published.[2] Freud and the psychoanalysts have brought this idea along prodigiously since; but we may remember that *Isis Unveiled* was published in 1877 and *The Secret Doctrine* in 1888, and that throughout Mme. Blavatsky's work runs the doctrine that the human ego is of far wider extent than the personal consciousness attached to the physical organism, which alone functions normally upon this plane.

For a most suggestive study of the anticipations of psychoanalysis in Theosophy readers may be referred to Dr. Hugh Shearman's recent book, *Modern Theosophy*, in which he quotes C. J. Jung as saying that such personalities as Mme. Blavatsky, "'though seeming like tiny, scattered islands in the ocean of mankind, are in reality 'like the peaks of submarine mountain ranges of considerable size.'" If the discovery of the "unconscious self" is one of the most powerful creative ideas of modern psychology, then Theosophy may claim a pioneer's share in it.

I will in conclusion refer to the idea which was from the very beginning part of the programme of Theosophy, "to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity." I am aware that the repetition of the word "brotherhood" is no panacea for all the ills that beset our race. A man's difficulties do not end when he has admitted all other men to be his brothers. Abel had a brother who might be considered quite a little problem child; so had Esau. But does anybody dispute that this universal brotherhood is *the* crying need of the world today, indeed, the very condition, so far as we can see, of the survival of the present race of men? Theosophists cannot possibly be told when they press this point, "Oh, that idea 'dates'!" It is the

[1] *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 233.

[2] In fairness E. V. Hartmann's *Philosophy of the Unconscious*, 1869, should not be neglected.

most living of all issues. And, writing at a period, the 1870's and 1880's, when the idea of large-scale international unity was very faint, when indeed the relative poverty of communications made the people of the earth far more widely separate than they can possibly be today, it was the leaders of the Theosophical Movement who put their finger upon what was to prove the most urgent need of the future, the *one creative idea for world politics.*

An eminent Jesuit has recently declared that in his opinion Theosophy is not likely "to have much of a future as a philosophy or institution." It certainly seems to keep well up with the present.

D. L. MURRAY

THE MORAL OF THE FABLE

Æsop always put the moral at the end of his fable. In this he showed his skill both as artist and as teacher; and illustrated a principle that is important in handling the story as a means of promulgation of moral truths.

In dealing with children, especially, it is important that a story which is to yield a moral should be well told as a story. Telling a story is a way of appealing to experience—of course, experience felt and rendered so as to exhibit clearly its *significance* rather than its details. If the story is not convincing in itself, it becomes no part of the young audience's experience; therefore, the appeal fails. Not only that, but the children feel also that the principle involved was offered to them on false pretences. When they are ultimately convinced of it, after such a feeling, it is not because, but in spite of, the badly told story. They might have been more helped by a patient reasoning to prove the abstract principle itself.

What gives such convincingness? As in abstract discussion, sincerity. But there is a story-teller's sincerity which is analogous to, but not identical with, that of the reasoner.

To be sincere, the reasoner must have himself felt the cogency of the arguments he advances; he must not have accepted his conclusions from some other motive and invented his arguments for the benefit of his listener. Now, the story-teller may sincerely accept a moral principle because it satisfies his reason, and even his heart; but if he does not *see* it in his experience, as the listener is to see it in the story, he is doing something analogous to the reasoner's invention of arguments for an ulterior motive. The motive's being good avails nothing. Its being ulterior kills the story.

The writer of fables with morals, therefore, must not be content with the soundness of his moral. He must assure himself that he sees it vividly in the story. This will steer his story safely between two dangers: that of being overcrowded with "realistic" detail which obscures the significant principle and that of appearing to be a fabrication to support a pet theory.

Anecdotes from personal experience are more often successful than the story with a moral because they are open only to the first danger; we have already *seen* their significance, or we should not tell them. And a clear-headed person has no difficulty in selecting the relevant aspects of an incident. The other faculty, that of vividly *seeing* a universal significance in particular incidents, is rarer. Perhaps those who do not feel sure of themselves had best read well-written stories to the children under their instruction.

L. W. S.

ADVICE TO A YOUNG POET

[We are publishing in two instalments, in successive issues, the illuminating and practical advice offered in this article by **Bhikshu Sangharakshita.** The several thoughtful essays from his pen which have appeared in our pages have been on religion and philosophy, but this article shows, as he himself has written, " how often the qualities of the poet are identical with those of the mystic, and how near Poetry often is to Religion. " The reader will not be surprised to learn that this English Buddhist monk, who has for the last several years made India his home, is himself a poet. He is, in fact, as he has written us, " a poet who became a bhikshu, not a bhikshu who has become a poet. " This article, he tells us, " arose out of some discussions with my friend Shri Sachindra Coomar Singh, a young Nepali poet, " and we are sure that it will be of value to other younger brothers in the art of Poetry.—ED.]

I

The utility of giving advice to a young poet may be questioned. One gives advice with the intention of improving, in some way or other, the person to whom it is addressed. Such a procedure may be admissible when we are concerned with an art or a science that can be taught and learned; but with regard to Poetry we have the classical assurance that poets are born, not made (*Poeta nascitur, non fit*). Let us at the beginning of these remarks disclaim the fond hope that they will help make a poet out of any one who is not a poet already. All that they hope to do is to tend what Nature has planted; to suggest to the young poet ways in which the capacities he possesses may be developed; to indicate the discipline by which his still inchoate inspiration can be transformed into the deliberate creativity of the mature artist.

Poetry, like other things, has two distinguishable, though inseparable, aspects: substance and form. Our hints on the cultivation of these aspects will be given separately; but it should be borne in mind that the distinction is made for the sake of convenience in exposition and does not correspond to any division of parts in the subject. In the fire of creative genius, substance and form are made to coalesce into the partless whole which is a work of art.

By the substance of Poetry we mean the experience that it contains. This experience is emotionally rather than intellectually toned; for, although Poetry contains definite thoughts and ideas, in its essence it does not consist of these. Even the most abstract and philosophical statement possesses emotional value, however little that may be. Conversely, even the most intensely emotional poem contains intellectual

elements. In the best Poetry, however, these elements occupy a strictly subordinate place and appear to function solely as aids to the exhibition of a non-intellectual experience. But here, too, we must beware of contrasting too sharply what are the co-existent aspects of Poetry rather than its mutually exclusive parts.

By the form of Poetry we mean the different species of poetic composition (lyric, epic, dramatic, etc.), together with the various metres, stanza forms and styles in which the predominantly emotional content is expressed. From our previous remarks it will be obvious that the substance of Poetry is not related to its form as wax to a seal, but in a manner so intimate that, strictly, it is impossible to speak of a relation at all.

Poetry expresses the personality of the poet. It records his deepest feelings and sublimest thoughts, his tears and smiles, anguish and delight, frustration and fulfilment. In short, it is the more or less complete embodiment of his whole experience of life. As the poet is, so also will his poetry be. Any change or development in the one will inevitably be paralleled in the other. To improve the poetry we must, therefore, first of all improve the poet whose expression it is. This improvement will not be ethical but artistic—or at least not directly ethical; for, if Plato is to be believed, since Beauty, Truth and Goodness are equally aspects of Reality, an approximation to one is also, indirectly, an approximation to each of the others.

The personality of the poet has, like the personalities of other men, two aspects: emotional and intellectual. The advice which we are about to offer the young poet therefore relates firstly more to the culture of his emotions, from which is created the substance of his poetry, and, secondly, more to the culture of his intellectual faculties, whence it derives its form. Once again, however, distinctions should not be mistaken for divisions. It should also be noted that the emotional and intellectual culture with regard to which our advice is offered is of a strictly limited kind, being simply what is significant and valuable from the poetic point of view. Moreover, our remarks are not exhaustive but suggestive. They do not provide a ready-made programme of poetic self-improvement but simply point out some of the qualities which, in the writer's opinion, a young poet should take special pains to develop.

There are five predominantly emotional qualities—aspects of the poet's experience of life—which, when developed, will enrich the substance of his poetry. These are: Observation, Sensitiveness, Sympathy, Solitude and Reflection.

All our knowledge and feeling begin from the impressions we derive from our five senses. Those derived from the eye are, however, more prominent and important than those entering through the ear or the other senses and we have therefore chosen the word *Observation* to cover the

poet's intensified awareness of the whole external world. Everyone sees mountains, trees, flowers, houses, people's faces and a thousand other things, every day. But the poet—or the artist—should not be satisfied with merely seeing things: he must learn to observe them. Observation of course implies concentration. A poet should be prepared to spend a whole day looking at a flower, for only then will he be able to observe it. Observation means a vivid awareness of the unique individuality of things. A poet should be alive to the subtlest differences of colour, shape, contour, tone, touch and smell and should know the exactly right, the inevitable, word with which to describe every one of them. He should mark the different ways in which trees, in accordance with the stoutness or slenderness of their trunks and branches and the relative scarcity or abundance of their leaves, dance and sway in the wind. He should be able to detect the change in the cuckoo's cry from month to month and the personalities of different kinds of flowers should be as distinctly recognizable to him as those of individual human beings. This faculty of intense observation has been beautifully illustrated by Shelley, who says of the poet:—

> He will watch from dawn to gloom
> The lake-reflected sun illume
> The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom...

Incidentally, the description of bees as "yellow" is a fine example of the kind of observation of which we are speaking. Any ordinary person, if asked to describe in one word the colour of a bee, would reply either that it was brown or that he had never noticed the insect's colour. The poets quite often startle us with epithets so fresh and original, yet withal so apt and vivid, that we realize with shame that we had never troubled to observe the objects to which their genius so triumphantly applies them. Those who are not poets can generally see Nature much more vividly through the eyes of the poets than with their own. Who had really seen the blackness of ash-buds in March, or the greenness of the evening sky, until a Tennyson or a Coleridge taught them to do so?

But, though second-hand observation may suffice for the ordinary person, a poet cannot be satisfied with seeing Nature through the eyes of another poet, however great. For him, in so far as he is a poet, not to see Nature with his own eyes is not to see her at all. Though he appreciates and admires the beauties of description found in poets of long ago, he does not simply purvey them at second hand in his own poems. On the contrary, he observes Nature with his own eyes as clearly as he can and describes what he has seen as strikingly as he is able. Few evidences of a decline in poetic vitality are more unmistakable than poets' slipping into the habit of drawing their knowledge of natural objects not from life but from literature. Such bookish poets merely describe descriptions. Hence their poetry,

though it may possess other great and noble qualities, does not impart to us the sensation of immediate impact with life. It may possess sweetness, artistry and charm but it is lacking in freshness, vigour and reality. Similes and metaphors, which are of the very essence of Poetry, are born of personal observation. The more accurate and truthful is the poet's observation of the beauties of Nature, the more readily will he apprehend the deeper relations and subtler interconnections which exist between them. The readier this apprehension, the more original, impressive and illuminating his similitudes will be.

By *Sensitiveness*, which is an entirely emotional quality, we mean depth and delicacy, or strength and refinement of feeling. Most people consider those emotions to be powerful which are accompanied by violent physical action; but in fact the opposite of this belief is nearer the truth. The more subtle an emotion grows the less adequate become the normal bodily means of its expression. A blow or an embrace may suffice to embody the full content of the grosser forms of hatred and desire. But by what motions save by those of Poetry, Music and the Visual Arts shall the finer feelings of the human soul find expression? The poet is compelled to give vent to his emotions in verse because they cannot be realized through any human relation: they refuse to terminate, in the noble words of Plato, on finite and particular objects; but protract themselves into the infinite and universal realm of Poetry and Truth. It is in this capacity of protraction or penetration into Reality that the strength of an emotion truly consists. Subtlety and strength of feeling are, therefore, fundamentally one quality. This quality we have indicated by the term "sensitiveness." The poet is aware of, and responds to, not only the grosser vibrations of the world of sense, but the immeasurably higher and finer vibrations of a world which lies beyond, a world which metaphysicians describe as a world of values but which the poet generally prefers to describe as a world of ideal forms of Beauty. It should not be thought, however, that the poet's aspiration takes wing on a world-transcending flight of the alone to the Alone. If there be mysticism in Poetry, it belongs more to the *via affirmativa* than to the *via negativa*. And if the poet possesses, as Aldous Huxley finely says of D. H. Lawrence (and his words have been applied with equal justice to Rainer Maria Rilke), "a capacity of experiencing unknown modes of being," he experiences them not by abstracting himself from sensible objects but rather by interpenetrating their essence with his own. Most poets would echo the words with which Wordsworth concludes his famous *Ode*:—

> To me the meanest flower that blows can give
> Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

The last four words are significant.

No outward and visible sign of emotion, such as tears, is capable of expressing the full depth of the inward and spiritual grace of the poet's thought, or the extreme intensity of his feelings.

Experiences of this kind may be natural enough to a poet of Wordsworth's eminence. But by what means can the young poet of today even approach the altitudes at which they are possible? How is he to subtilize his feelings to the point at which they can become sensitive to the most delicate touches of the Eternal Beauty? The solution to this problem lies in the domain of what may be termed the asceticism of art. Æsthetic and religious experience belong to a common order and, in the former no less than the latter, the higher and subtler reaches are to be attained by the renunciation of those which are, in comparison, low and gross. The philosophy of this ascesis, and the manner in which the lover of Beauty ascends from the experience of its lowest to the experience of its highest forms until, in the last supreme flight of his soul, he soars into the presence of Beauty Ineffable, has been for all time unfolded with matchless artistry in Plato's *Symposium*, wherein the incomparable genius of the Athenian poet-philosopher has magisterially blended the scattered rays of Philosophy, Religion and Art into a single dazzling beam that penetrates far, far into the obscure depths of Reality.

In these remarks it is our more modest intention to offer only one or two suggestions (apart from advising the young poet to read and reread the *Symposium*) concerning the cultivation of sensitiveness; for the subject is so intensely personal, and depends so much more upon the sincerity and integrity of the poet than upon the mechanical application of rules, that even these are advanced with hesitation. To begin with, it should be clearly understood that emotion is essentially a force and that it has a natural tendency to express itself in some outward form. If this force is consciously checked, so that it is no longer able to express itself in the normal manner, the inhibited energy will assume a subtler and more powerful form and therefore tend to find expression on a higher plane of experience. Feelings are like fountains, in which the water, unable to find an outlet on its own level, shoots up through a narrow aperture to leap a hundred feet into the air.

It should be noted that the "check" of which we speak is a conscious and deliberate process. Were it unconscious, then the inhibited emotion would simply be pressed down into the unconscious depths below the conscious surface of the mind and what psychic disturbances a repressed emotion is capable of creating have been too strongly insisted on by psychoanalysts to need repetition here. The poet, like the mystic, has at all times to be aware of his feelings: he must saturate them with consciousness. For, like the breath,

thought and emotion are naturally inhibited when the unwavering beam of awareness falls upon them and at once resolve themselves into subtler forms, just as the dew melts, in the warm rays of the early morning sun, into mist and air. These subtler forms are the raw material not only of art but also of spirituality. From them the poet, the painter and the musician create, in their respective media, images of imperishable beauty ; while the mystic, repeating the process of inhibition over again, rises to even sublimer heights of experience. Such are the principles to be followed in the cultivation of sensitiveness, or delicacy and depth of feeling. The exact manner of their application must be determined by the young poet, no less than by the novice in mysticism, for himself.

Supremely important as the cultivation of sensitiveness is, it should not be supposed that in the previous paragraph we have advised the young poet to isolate himself in an ivory tower of rarefied personal emotion. The varieties of Poetry are multitudinous and by no means all of them deal with the poet's private feelings. Epic, narrative and dramatic poems, for instance, are generally concerned with the thoughts, feelings and actions of people far remote in time and place from the poet who narrates them, and in widely different circumstances from his own. Even lyric poetry, into which the poet's deepest and most intimate experiences naturally flow, is sometimes in a manner dramatic, being written by the poet not in his own character but in that of some other person, real or imagined. Here, however, our concern is not so much with the form as with the manner in which this is done. Descriptions must possess liveliness and poetic truth. It is not enough for the poet to observe accurately and delineate naturally external effects of strong feeling ; for, as we have already said, the most powerful feelings cannot be adequately expressed by any bodily movements. By an act of sympathy the poet must project himself out of his own personality into that of another being and experience the emotions of that being because, for the moment at least, he has become one with him. This capacity for universal *Sympathy*, in which the joys and sorrows of others are felt as keenly as our own, is yet another quality which has to be developed by the poet no less than by the religious devotee. The secret of Art is identical with the secret of Spirituality. Shelley writes in *A Defence of Poetry* :—

> The great secret of morals is love ; or a going out of our nature, and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own. A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively ; he must put himself in the place of another and of many others ; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own.

The emotion to which Shelley, in

this passage, from his more general point of view, has given the name "love" corresponds with what we, from the special point of view of Poetry, have called "sympathy." We would go further than Shelley only in advising the young poet not merely to make the pleasures and pains of the human species his own but also to cultivate a feeling of identity with, and sympathy for, every kind of sentient being. The poet's sympathies must be universal. He must be able to enter into the existences, and share the feelings, not only of human beings, not only of birds and beasts, but even of trees, flowers, mountains, streams and stones. A poet in whom this quality of sympathy is highly developed will be able to describe the thoughts and emotions of others with peculiar force and vividness. For he will be describing not what he has observed from without but what he has experienced from within.

It is for this reason that supreme Poetry, no less than the higher kind of Religion, possesses the power of lifting us out of the littleness of our individual being into an infinitely deeper, richer and wider kind of life. To read Poetry of this exalted type is much more than witnessing unfamiliar situations and novel sentiments: it is an initiation into a new mode of being. Momentarily we experience what the poet experienced when with his "glassy essence" he interpenetrated the essence of another form of life and felt the pulsation of its existence as his own. Sympathy is therefore closely allied to self-transcendence, to the power of getting beyond one's personal ego.

A self-centred man may be a competent versifier; he can never be a great poet. Beauty and goodness once more join hands. The cultivation of sympathy implies the adoption of a selfless attitude towards life. As we remarked at the outset we entertain no hope that these suggestions will make a poet of any one who is not a poet already. The utmost they can accomplish is to help in the development of a congenital aptitude. Sympathy, even more perhaps than any of the qualities already mentioned, is a natural endowment; and we are therefore able to offer less advice on its cultivation than on that of any other quality. All that can be suggested in this regard is that the cultivation of Observation and Sensitiveness will naturally contribute to the enlargement of the poet's sympathies. Since we generally find it easier to sympathize with the sorrows than with the joys of our fellow men, the young poet may in addition be recommended to direct his attention first of all to the miseries and misfortunes of others, and only afterwards to their consolations and blessings. For, if they are contemplated in the reverse order, he may feel not sympathy but envy. More than this cannot be said on the subject without trespassing beyond the uncertain boundary which divides the life æsthetic from the life spiritual and exchanging the realm of Poetry for the sister realm of Religion.

BHIKSHU SANGHARAKSHITA

(To be concluded)

THE NEED OF A UNIVERSAL PHILOSOPHY

[**Dr. S. Vahiduddin** examines in this thoughtful article the shortcomings of philosophy which fails to rise to the universal and the transcendent and pleads for a universal approach not only in thought but also in action, in education and in politics, " to lift man above the partitions of the schools and the cleavage between the East and the West. "—ED.]

Philosophy as a goal of human speculation is the *philosophia perennis*, the embodiment of universal knowledge. But philosophy as a historical manifestation has strayed in devious ways and often wasted itself in speculations with no perennial significance. Philosophers indeed have through the ages struggled for universality but ever and anon they succumbed to the ills of the times. Scepticism, pragmatism, utilitarianism, positivism and other counsels of despair took their toll and philosophers betrayed their universal mission.

But there were notable exceptions. Plato and Aristotle forced their way to universality. Plato saw in the philosopher the spectator of all times and places who alone, with his vision of the universal, was capable of ruling. The Greeks in their philosophical tradition were governed by confidence in reason. Rationalism was natural to them. Philosophers of the West followed the Greek way, aiming at a detached and rational formulation. It was for Spinoza the function of a philosopher neither to laugh nor to weep but to understand, to understand even understanding itself, to apprehend the sunshine and gloom of life. Hegel subordinated every value to knowledge and saw in philosophy the highest knowledge.

Philosophy in the West has been theory. Philosophy in the East, especially in India, has been more. It has sought and offered salvation and light in suffering. Existentialism, which has attained such a vogue in Europe today, is a reaction against the European philosophical traditions and represents a swing back to the religious roots of European culture. It is a return to the spirit of Augustine, Pascal and Kierkegaard, a return to the fundamental problems of human life and existence, though its vision is hazy and its ways are doubtful. But a philosophy that is to be universal must absorb and surpass every school.

Philosophy has till now been a slave of the times. Every poet, said Schiller, is the child of his age but woe betide him when he becomes its favourite ! Philosophy, too, cannot escape its own epoch but it is disastrous for it to become only the mouthpiece of the times. Even for Hegel, philosophy could not raise itself above its age. The spirit of philosophy is the spirit of the age, the consciousness of the epoch. But it may be also an anticipation of the

morrow. Nay, it may even be a protest against the spirit of the times, or the epochal consciousness, as Jaspers calls it.

In Hegel we find only respect for all that is, from which political subservience follows as a dangerous corollary. But all that is does not remain where it is. The spirit is constantly in revolution. Hence the consciousness of philosophy becomes the consciousness of a revolution. The reactionary and revolutionary moments are so intimately blended in the philosophy of Hegel that it is difficult to know where we stand. Perhaps it is characteristic of all revolution that we do not know where we are and the result is a surprise or a shock. Anyhow the Hegelian synthesis was by no means the last word, the reconciliation of all conflicts. The nemesis that, in the shape of dialectical materialism, overtook Hegel's philosophy shows the dismal failure of the last great attempt in the West at a universal synthesis.

It is the beginning that matters most in philosophy and hence the quest of a method looms large in philosophical speculation. Descartes started with doubt and ended in certainty, the certainty of his own being: *Cogito, ergo sum.* But the Cartesian way is only the way of knowledge. As Aristotle remarks, what is " first " and primary for my knowledge need not be " first " and primary in itself. The real order would be " I am, therefore I think." Thought presupposes my existence and my existence needs no thought. Awake or asleep, fully or dimly conscious, I am. Descartes pursued the right way, however, in taking thought to include almost the whole field of consciousness.

But even in its limitation thought as thought reveals self-transcendence. Thought negates itself and transcends itself in quest of an absolute reconciliation. As a dialectical movement it has its own limitations and it is impossible to accommodate every antithesis in the final synthesis. The tragedy of Hegel's philosophy is the tragedy of life.

Thought ends in frustration. But its long and weary way has not been in vain. It is characteristic of modern times that frustration should play such a vital rôle in the philosophy of Karl Jaspers. But self-transcendence is not characteristic of thought alone. In language and in social communication we meet other forms of self-transcendence. Society is the embodiment of objective transcendence. In love, sympathy and friendship we leave the solitary confinement of our own being and correspond and converse with one another. Language is one of the several modes of communication. But words, like " Nature, " " half reveal and half conceal the soul within. " Language might frustrate its own end and give birth to misunderstanding. But language is a human prerogative. It was Wilhelm von Humboldt who remarked that man does not create language, but it is only through language that

he has become what he is, distinctly human.

On the basis of these characteristic human interrelations and responses, society comes into being and with its rise man's conception of duty takes on a new significance. The German sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies distinguished between society as a natural fellowship based on spiritual or biological foundations (*Gemeinschaft*) and society as an artificial grouping (*Gesellschaft*), a conglomeration of individuals brought together accidentally through extraneous bonds and fleeting interests.

It is only when society takes an external and artificial form that a threat to personality begins to develop. Men and women without any personal imprint, imbued with the spirit of the commonplace, come to predominate. Martin Heidegger's protest is against the condition of man when he becomes "anybody," a social repetition.

But when society brings about communication between persons who suffer with one another, who love one another and convey the light of reason and the fire of passion from one to another, culture is born. Culture is the embodiment of man's appreciation of lasting values. As a product of culture man does not stand in a natural process; he belongs not to a generation that passes but to a historical process. He holds his own in the storms that rage round him; he thinks and contemplates his own thoughts, acts and appreciates all that is beautiful and sublime.

The State is a ruling society whose function is not to rob the individual of freedom but to assure him freedom against alien assault and to provide conditions favourable to his growth. The State has to guard and promote culture, to work for cultural security. Every order presupposes restraint on individual liberty and every State, as the embodiment of national traditions and as the historical manifestation of a nation's will, has the right to assert itself against the individual's passing whims.

Every State, even a democratic one, is held in a painful tension between authority and individual liberty. The accent constantly shifts between these and statecraft is called upon to strike the balance between them. In things mundane, however, there is always a falling short of fulfilment and the State as an idea does not find a corresponding expression in reality. Once dominated by unscrupulous individuals with vested interests, it ruthlessly curtails the freedom which it was supposed to guarantee. Time and again, in the person of a tyrant, it has stained its hands with innocent blood.

The State, however, can never in justice trespass on the rights that flow from the very idea of personality. Man is not a machine, nor is he only a living organism. He is a person and has rights as such. He is not only unlike every other but can transcend the limits of his own

life. He is, as Max Scheler said, the great hermit who can deny his own life and yet he is also a born dilettante who can pursue pleasures for their own sake apart from biological considerations. Even the philosophy of Bergson remains enmeshed in biological categories, so it is no wonder that the problem of personality eludes its grasp.

Eastern thought has always attempted to pass beyond life and mind to the realm of personal spirituality. Justice is the virtue of the State, said Plato. It is only philosophical justice to recognize different orders of being as autonomous, to give every plane of existence or of value its due and yet to recognize the One, the nameless ground of all names and determinations. Philosophy moves from *Saguna* to *Nirguna*. Modern ontologies, notably Nicolai Hartmann's, have shown scrupulous respect for different orders of being but without any transcendental cognizance they leave world history to chance.

Philosophy is called upon to undertake a critique of the times and to evaluate the historical moment of man's existence today. Man has become so dissatisfied with himself that he seeks to forget himself in diversions of doubtful value. In spite of the fact that everyone is condemned to capital punishment, as Victor Hugo said, people have no patience with life. The great question of Hamlet, "To be, or not to be?" is decided by statesmen in their assemblies or by soldiers on the battlefield. Man is uprooted, says Jaspers, he has lost his sense of the Divine Presence. Heidegger finds man "thrown" into the world, a child of care. The dread of existence hangs over the philosophy of Heidegger. "Light, more light!" Goethe cried in the agony of his soul. Is the evil in man so radical as to lead him inexorably to his doom?

If not, what is the way out of this darkness? Humanism in European speculation could not succeed because, when man himself becomes the last word of existence, he cannot go beyond himself and when he cannot transcend himself he cannot attain to humanity. Humanity itself points to something higher than man. Kant said, it is the idea of humanity that lives in man that is sacred. With the idea of Man, man surpasses himself. Humanism failed in the French Revolution because it had no higher recourse than itself and Communism fails in its very success because, in spite of all its sacrifice and its zeal, it cannot go beyond itself. It is the same with the Humanism of Sartre and Heidegger. Only in Jaspers do we find the sense of Transcendence hallowing our efforts. But Jaspers finds Transcendence mostly in frustration. It is not, however, to be found only in frustration; in all fulfilments of love and duty we become aware of Transcendence.

But if philosophy is to fulfil its universal mission it has to give a new orientation to the conception of man and the State. It has to imbibe

the great traditions of both the East and the West, to make itself refulgent with the light of the East and quickened with the vigour of the West. How can this reconciliation of East and West be brought about? The rationalism which has characterized the Greek tradition and the irrationalism which has been the hall-mark of the philosophy called Eastern need reconciliation.

To begin with intuition or immediate knowledge would be idle. The irrational principle, by whatever name called, and which, following a great mediæval tradition, we might call "illumination" should come after thought, not as a substitute for thought. Illumination is not the negation of thought but its enrichment, its development and culmination. It is the journey's end and not its beginning.

But, whether we follow thought to its final consequences or not, the problem of action is urgent. We ought to do our duty, though the heavens fall. With Kant and the *Gita* we have to affirm the unconditional imperative of duty. Our duty knows no "ifs"; it is categorical. But it is not "abstract." It is chastened by love and seeks fulfilment in personal communication. On this categorical basis other imperatives may arise which are conditional and hypothetical. But we cannot make the imperative of morality itself conditional without imperiling its very existence.

Man has in our day become conscious of rights at the expense of duties. No doubt it is the function of the State to assure the citizen of his rights against his fellow citizens and the duty of an international authority to guarantee the rights of a State against other States and the rights of a group in a State against the State. With all that man has suffered in the past in national States, he is looking forward to the creation of a World State to herald a new era of peace and to effect a lasting reconciliation between moral and political life.

Kant had already seen that perpetual peace could be brought about only on the basis of world federation. Politics would not conflict with morality if all its maxims required publicity to be effective. Secrecy breeds mistrust and *vice versa*.

But the State might fail in its duty and the international authority might shirk its task and become the mouthpiece of power politics. Against the limitations inherent in the world structure there is no guarantee but faith in the significance of existence, appearances notwithstanding. All that is real is rational and all that is rational is real, said Hegel. But the real is only partly rational and the irrational residue defies our wits. It is only our faith, not so much in the rationality of the real as in its significance, that can illuminate our path.

Education is the responsibility of the State and Plato wisely accorded to education a decisive rôle. But modern education, without any

philosophical assessment of Man, portends ill for human culture. Only true education can lead man to look beyond the relativities of human existence to lasting values, beyond the daily routine of human life to the creations of art and the wonders of religious experience. Only such an educational ideal can satisfy the aspirations of the East and make the school again a sanctuary and an *ashram*.

Man is the measure of all things, the ancient Sophist said. Efficiency and utility are the measures of man, the modern educationists affirm. But man cannot be the criterion of himself; and efficiency and utility cannot be the measure of all values. All educational endeavour should be to sustain the spirit of sacrifice in us, the sacrifice, to higher values, of our natural devotion to lower values; the sacrifice of the good to the better. The ideal should not be that of good living but that of living worthily. Seek not happiness but deserve it, said Kant.

Only on the basis of such an orientation in education can the sense of collective responsibility grow in us. We should then feel guilt with the guilty and our heart would beat in unison with the rest of mankind. Today a painful tension is developing between the individual and society. In social relations man becomes "anybody," he loses his "ownness," as Heidegger would say, and in solitude, in detachment from society, he becomes "autistic," to use an expression of the Swiss psychiatrist Bleuler. It is now for education to make the individual fruitful for society and society significant for the individual, to preserve at once the values of society and of solitude, of words and of silence.

In the confusion that prevails a universal approach in thought and action, in education and politics, is needed to lift man above the partitions of the schools and the cleavage between the East and the West. It is the function of a philosophy with a universal vision to lead man to reflect upon himself and to reflect light back upon the world, to enable him to act, informed with knowledge; and to know, quickened by love. Philosophy is love of wisdom, said the ancients, and it is only when love is associated with wisdom and wisdom becomes effective in action that a world can be born where life is worth suffering.

S. VAHIDUDDIN

TRADING LINKS OF OLD WORLD EMPIRES

[It is an interesting account of the old trade routes that **Mr. Edmund Roberts** of Norwich gives us here. Long before our days of swift transit and telecommunication the caravans were threading their slow and sometimes dangerous way across the deserts; and the mariners of different regions were braving the terrors of the seas. Were not these traders making their own affirmation of the essential oneness of the human family in refusing isolation on behalf of their peoples, in bringing their countries' specialities to the world's markets and taking home the offerings of others in exchange? It could not have been only material products that they brought, and who shall say that the invisible freight that these daring adventurers of commerce carried—ideas, customs, attitudes and knowledge, even the ocular demonstration that they afforded to those they visited of their common humanity—was of less value in laying the foundations for the future's dream of a united, peaceful world than was all the treasure their patient camels and pack-horses bore?—ED.]

The history of civilization might be written around the story of trade routes between Europe and the East. During the course of centuries they have seen the camel and the pack-horse followed by the age of sails; itself only to be superseded by the era of the steamship, and today the aeroplane has shortened the time of conveyance to days, as compared with the months during which goods were in transit in mediæval days. Giant planes now cross in a few hours the very desert painfully trodden by the camel for centuries, such crossings in former days often lengthening into months.

The importance of these ancient trade routes in the story of human endeavour cannot be exaggerated, and historians and archæologists are paying increasing attention to them. Shortly before the last war, for example, British archæologists working in Lower Burma were concentrating on a study of one of the oldest of such routes, that between India and the Far East.

The route crossed peninsular Siam at the only latitude which provided sheltered anchorages on both coasts, which were at the same time connected by what were formerly deep rivers running from the narrow watershed, affording a nearly unbroken waterway across the peninsula. The ancient route begins at Takoapa (or Taikkala), believed to be the site of the old mart of Takola, mentioned in the second century by Claudius Ptolemy, the famous Alexandrian geographer. The supposed site of the ancient port is an open sandy space, locally known as the "Plain of Monuments," on an island near the mouth of the Takoapa River. Several mounds were excavated, and the foundations of an extensive early Indian temple have been brought to light. Pottery and

beads have also been found, proofs of habitation at some period or other.

After completing excavations in the neighbourhood of Takoapa, the expedition crossed to the east coast, following the old trade route leading to the Bay of Bandon. When this route was in use the crossing was comparatively easy, but the 20th century explorers found the task slow and difficult because of the low state of the rivers, which have silted up in the course of centuries. There were many rapids and shallows, all of which had to be negotiated with heavily laden boats. The villages along the route were reported still deeply impressed with Indian folk-lore and the tradition of an ancient Indian migration eastward.

South of the Bay of Bandon lies a remote city called Vieng Sva. It is enveloped by a dense thorn jungle and the archæologists had to hack their way through this before they could reach a moated enclosure with a ruined central shrine. There a beautiful statue of Buddha was brought to light, and it seems that in the remote past Vieng Sva was populated from India. The next city *en route* was Chaiya, which thrived about a thousand years ago and where thousands of bowls, made of porcelain, have been unearthed.

Two other trade routes of lesser importance, subsidiary to this great highway from the Far East to India, have also been investigated. Near the western terminus of one of these, ancient stone baths carved out of the living rock, and still overflowing with hot salt water from underlying springs, were found deep in the jungle. The existence of this thermal establishment would appear to indicate the former existence of a highly developed civilization in the neighbourhood.

The few facts mentioned above show what riches remain to be revealed to us of the history and development of the ancient trade routes of the world. Up to the present, only the surface of the ground has been scratched, so to speak. There is certainly no more fascinating study than that of the growth of these ancient trade routes, along which flowed riches of gold, silver, precious stones, linen, silks, incense and spices. Trade was one of the earliest growths of civilization, and the lines of intercommunication in Europe between the Baltic and the Mediterranean, which were in existence as long ago as the Stone Age, are clearly visible.

The trade routes of the ancient world frequently afforded to explorers the only practicable routes along which to travel. This was so in the case of Marco Polo, who traversed those of Asia. During recent years explorers have been paying considerable attention to these old highways, and among those who have traced certain of them are Dr. Sven Hedin, the eminent Swedish explorer; Sir Aurel Stein; and M. Haardt.

Actually how far back in the mists of antiquity these trade routes began cannot be definitely discovered. Sir Halford Mackinder, who made a

study of their evolution, suggested that some of them began as "raid routes," and in several cases the evidence seems to bear out this theory. The Norse pirates of Northern Europe, for example, sailed out every spring in search of spoil, and came back in the autumn laden with the fruits of their forays. In Africa, again, the routes followed by early European explorers were those originally marked out by the Arab slave traders on their nefarious business. Testimony given by such men as Livingstone relates to the terrible evidences of this trade that were found strewing the routes.

Long before the Christian era primitive commercial highways were in existence. The Stone Age routes of Europe were touched upon in a previous paragraph. They came into being because the amber of the Baltic was in great demand. This led to the establishment of two well-trodden routes from that sea to the Mediterranean. Sir Flinders Petrie has proved that, further south, Gaza in Southern Palestine, mentioned in many places in the Bible, was a great mart in ancient times, trading routes leading to it from the north and the south.

Early trade of this type was not confined to a small area, and it is astonishing to learn how widely scattered the products of the Old World countries became, undoubtedly by means of repeated exchanges. As a proof of this, what is believed to have been Irish gold has been found on the site of Troy, which was flourishing a thousand years B.C. In those days Ireland was one of the most important sources of gold in the world.

The two most powerful of the Old World empires to establish trading routes early in the history of civilization were Egypt and Babylonia. In their cases it is possible that raids and forays marked the commencement of the interchange of goods. The fact that each had merchandise of value to the other may have been an accidental discovery resulting from the spoils of war but as time went on, it seems, the people discovered that peaceful trading was more profitable than constant fighting. Palestine lay between the two, and a great amount of merchandise passed through it, and whoever controlled that country had command of the routes leading to the east and the north, and then west to Europe. Thus for centuries there was extreme rivalry over the possession of it, which explains why the Israelites were always struggling for their freedom.

The earliest trade routes, therefore, were established, as it were, as a result of accidental discovery of the value of goods. Gradually, with the passage of time, these routes were extended further east, north and west, until both Europe and the Far East were contributing their quotas of wealth. Men became more venturesome, and the Phœnicians established the first great sea routes in the history of the world, sailing, we believe, as far west as Britain.

Overland another route traversed Asia Minor, and linked up Europe. Pointing towards the East yet another route led to Persia, and the wealth of the Far East was brought to India, partly by the ancient route the British archæologists have been exploring, and then up the Persian Gulf and overland westwards.

The rise of the Greek Empire, which subdued Persia, led to changes and further developments in the routes, although their main directions were unaltered, and it was along the ancient trade routes between East and West that the riches of the world continued to flow in increasing volume. One of the routes led up the Red Sea, which was dotted with important commercial stations, and overland to Alexandria; and an alternative route from the Indian ports led to the head of the Persian Gulf, as mentioned above, from whence the goods were taken overland by desert caravan. It is believed that nearly 2,000 years ago the Greeks were aware of the sea route to China *via* India, for their venturesome pilots thought nothing of the crossing from the Red Sea to India, accomplishing it regularly.

These two main sea routes were supplemented by the great overland route through Asia and China, which it is believed established contact with Western civilization early in the Christian era. In times of peace this route was far more convenient and quicker for the goods of Northern India and China than the ocean routes. The cost of travelling by land was greater, but the expense was more than counterbalanced by the high value of the goods carried, which were generally light and of small bulk.

Three notable routes stretched westwards from China overland, and they converged on the important markets of Samarkand and Bokhara. These towns were great junctions, for there the caravans from China, traversing the silk route, met those coming from India; and there, too, the termini of the routes from the West were met. These ancient trade routes linking East and West maintained their supreme importance until the 15th century, when the discovery of the New World and the Cape route to India and the East completely altered the course of world trade and for a period the sea became predominant.

The Cape Route to the East played an increasingly important part in the commerce of Europe, and for practically three centuries it was unassailed. Not until the cutting of the Suez Canal was transport once more diverted through the Mediterranean. With the discovery and settlement of the New World came the establishment of what was destined to become the busiest world sea route, that to North America, and a little later that to South America was established. Then, towards the end of the 18th century came the settlement of Australia; and this was followed in the last century by the Australasian route. Today, strangely enough, along the

routes linking East and West, traffic is being diverted back once more overland, *via* the air, and at the present time aeroplanes are regularly travelling over the track of the ancient trade route between Egypt and Babylonia, one of the very earliest to be established.

EDMUND ROBERTS

STUDY OF POLITICS

From Germany we have received a translation of an article by Staatsminister Professor Franz Fendt, "Do We Need Political Science in Germany?"

It ends by saying that politicians ought to be the "first of all scientists." This is the classical Greek attitude. And the same disinterested rationality is shown in the whole argument.

For 200 years now, we have lived in an age of science. In economic matters, where it is profitable and conducive to increase in property, we apply the results of scientific investigation. Not so in politics. Aristotle, Hobbes, Montesquieu, attempted to discover the *principles* of the life and growth of the State. But people generally, and politicians, have been indifferent to these investigations. In politics, we still act empirically, "living according to accidental experiences." We hope that, somehow, through each man playing for his own hand, will come about the solution of the very complex social, economic and cultural problems involved in the life of a modern State. The political scene becomes "the battlefield of groups of interests," and hence, to decent citizens political matters seem rather unsavoury. But indifference does not save these citizens from becoming pawns in the game of these groups of interests, played for power.

Professor Fendt pleads for an institute in Germany that would objectively study political facts and problems, in a spirit of scholarship, free from any party influences. Then the politician advocating any policy and the citizen affected by it can both consider the the question in the light of probable consequences and of the history of similar moves in the past. With such information available, the citizen, who is now disgusted because of the parties' opportunism and group loyalties, will become interested and a genuine public opinion will be built up.

Though this plea is made with reference to Germany, every State in the world needs to consider ways and means to prevent "groups of interests" from dominating political life and introducing into it rationality and detached wisdom.

R. P. S.

RADHA AND KRISHNA

[**Shri Irach J. S. Taraporewala** is a well-known scholar of Sanskrit and Avesta lore and in this short paper has something to offer on the much talked of Krishna-Rādhā relationship—Ed.]

Some time back a series of articles appeared in one of the leading papers of Uttar Pradesh from the pen of a well-known Indologist in which he sought to prove that Rādhā, the Gopi best beloved of Shri Krishna, is a later invention of the Bhakti school. He has pointed out that the name Rādhā *as that of a Gopi* is not mentioned at all in the *Bhagavata*, which is the prime source of Krishna legends. The name Rādhā is mentioned, indeed, but as that of some distant relation of Shri Krishna. And in the *Mahabharata* and in the *Harivamsha*, the other two early sources of the Krishna cycle of tales, there is no mention of Rādhā the milkmaid. The *Mahabharata* does mention one Rādhā, but then she is the foster-mother of Karna and not the Gopi.

The question has also been discussed by Dr. Sushil Kumar De, in his standard work on the early history of the Vaishnava faith and movement in Bengal; and he mentions that the Gopi legend first develops in the *Harivamsha* and in the *Vishnu Purana* and it attains its full development in the later *Padma* and *Brahmavaivarte Puranas*. In the latter we get almost the first mention of Rādhā, the Gopi to whom Nanda entrusted the infant Krishna during the rains. Later on the theme of the love of Rādhā and Krishna has developed and it is the subject-matter of the famous lyric poem in Sanskrit—the *Gita-Govinda* of Jayadeva. Since that time the Rādhā-Krishna cult may be said to have begun and this was particularly emphasised by the Nimborka school of Vaishnavas. The Vaishnavas all over India believe implicitly in the existence of Rādhā, and even a family history has been invented for her.

Rādhā, the milkmaid, listens to the flute of Krishna and loses her whole being in him. In the deeper sense "the flute is the irresistible call of the Infinite; Krishna is God, and Rādhā the human soul."[1] This is indeed the correct interpretation of the Rādhā-cult. And a consideration of the root meaning of the name Rādhā helps this idea considerably.

The name Rādhā is used for girls alone because it is feminine. The corresponding masculine form is not found in Sanskrit, but the masculine form *rādha* (or *rāda*) is known in Avesta in the sense of "guardian," and particularly "husband." The word is derived from an Aryan root, *rād*, which has a variety of meanings. In Sanskrit we have the corresponding root *rādh*, which among others

[1] *Myths of the Hindus and the Buddhists* by Sister Nivedita and Ananda Coomaraswamy, p. 218.

has the sense of "to satisfy" or "to fulfil." So the Avesta *rāda* (masculine) means "supporter," hence "guardian" or "husband." From this comes the secondary sense of "lover." In Avesta the feminine has not been used; and it seems that the Sanskrit feminine *rādhā* originally meant "beloved."

Hence we may conclude that when the Gopi legends of Krishna started, the epithet *rādhā* was applied to every one of these maidens. they were, each one, "the beloved" of Krishna. Each Gopi was Rādhā to the Lord and only later a special Rādhā legend started about the best-beloved Gopi.

The stories tell us that Krishna Himself is ever longing for his Rādhā. One Bengali poet has sung that Krishna's flute has but one note —the call for Rādhā. And we also read that when Rādhā began to think that she was the only beloved of the Lord, Krishna disappeared from her side. For Krishna belongs to every single Gopi. Every human soul is "beloved" of the Supreme Lord.

IRACH J. S. TARAPOREWALA

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

In the *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research* (Vol. 50, Part 183), May 1953, appears a remarkably objective and factual account by Dr. S. G. Soal, the famous parapsychologist, of his experiments in psychical research. It is a tale of patient and laborious truth-seeking, not of weird and exciting happenings. For a long time Dr. Soal found no evidence at all that he could consider scientific for the existence of any paranormal perception. And even now, after having conclusively proved that of telepathy, he says:—

> In the whole of my life I have met only three persons who have convinced me through personal experience that they possessed paranormal powers.... it is as well to remember that throughout history ESP subjects who can produce their results under controlled conditions have never been numerous.... Probably a larger proportion of the human race possesses sporadic powers of paranormal perception. These are the persons who can justly claim perhaps to have had three or four genuine telepathic experiences in a lifetime.

Students of Theosophy hold that, while this is so at present, *everyone* has such powers potentially and that in a time to come they will be exercised by the race normally. The quotation above implies the admission that phenomena occurring outside controlled experiments are not necessarily due to fraud or delusion; it is only that the scientist, with his rigid rules of evidence, does not feel sure of them. It is odd, therefore, to find Dr. Soal suggesting that such phenomena as "*apports*," "materialized spirits" and "levitation of objects" are not real because he has had no satisfactory experience of them. Though the spiritistic explanation is hard to accept, the mass of testimony to the genuineness of the *phenomena* is overwhelming.

Dr. Soal speaks also of fair and unfair criticisms of psychical research. The latter comes from two sources: certain spiritualists who are anxious to quash any explanation alternative to their own; and prejudiced skeptics like D. H. Rawcliffe, author of *The Psychology of the Occult*. Both types can reach astonishing depths of bigotry and intellectual dishonesty.

Even those of us who think the present conclusions of psychical research too timid are grateful for the invaluable work of men like Dr. Soal and Dr. Rhine in rescuing the subject from mere sensation-seeking and sentiment-mongering.

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

A DISTINGUISHED PIECE OF WORK *

These volumes are an important contribution both to philosophical studies and to international understanding. No serious student of philosophy or of human affairs should neglect to read them. Volume I is devoted to Oriental philosophy, and Volume II, in the main, to Western philosophy. Wisely, no attempt is made at strictly chronological treatment or at rigorous historical method. The work is a collection of essays by a team of specialists, mostly Indian scholars. The result is a brilliant mosaic, of which the underlying pattern will be discerned only by those who study the whole with great care. The effort will be amply rewarded. The Government of India is to be congratulated on sponsoring this distinguished work.

The first three parts of Volume I consist of authoritative essays by Indian scholars on Indian Philosophy, and the fourth part is devoted to Chinese and Japanese thought. Volume II deals with Western philosophy, including essays on Persian, Jewish and Islamic thought, under the traditional headings of ancient, mediæval, modern and contemporary. The brilliant essays on contemporary Western philosophy will be perhaps of most interest to many European scholars. It is very interesting to have such recent or contemporary movements as Idealism, Pragmatism, Evolutionism, Realism, Marxism, Logical Positivism and Existentialism presented by scholars from a different cultural climate. Most Western scholars have never tried to look impartially at these developments, still less to look at them together and in relation to one another. This volume may provoke them to the effort.

A specially notable contribution to this final part, is the essay on "Marxism" by Abu Sayeed Ayyub. This, while critical, shows an admirable freedom from hostile bias and makes it clear that Marxist doctrines are worthy of serious academic study. Such an objective approach to Marxism is now almost unknown among Western scholars, and this essay in particular conspicuously confirms the publishers' claim that (as a whole)

> this work reflects in the ideological field the same ideal of international understanding which Jawaharlal Nehru seeks to achieve in the field of practical politics.

The survey by Dr. Radhakrishnan with which the second volume concludes is the work of a mind uniquely sensitive to the characteristic ideas and strivings of both Eastern and Western thought. Thus Radhakrishnan states bluntly that "each age has its faith and our age is committed to science." In a sense this commitment is inevitable in practice, because of irreversible technological advances, but many false philosophical conclusions have been based upon it, *e.g.*, materialistic, mechanistic and positivistic conclusions. Science has not, however, made philosophy redundant, any more than it has made religion redundant. "A scientific study of the facts of nature takes us," says Radhakrishnan, "beyond the facts to the transcendent Being which is also Freedom."

This quest for the transcendent Being is perhaps the most important recurrent theme of Indian philosophy, whether the dominant emphasis be on

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* *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western.* Sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Government of India. Editorial Board: SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN, Chairman; A. R. WADIA, D. M. DATTA and HUMAYUN KABIR, Secretary. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. Vol. I, 617 pp. Vol. II, 462 pp. 1953. 65*s.* the set.)

the theoretical or on the practical significance of the quest. With regard to the opposition of theory and practice, indeed, I think that most of the contributors to these volumes would emphasize their mutual interdependence rather than their opposition. Most Oriental thinkers, including the Chinese, recur again and again to the principle that the path to truth is a path of at least moral as well as intellectual discipline. The finite given self must be transcended if the goal is to be achieved, whether the goal be thought of as speculative truth or moral goodness or union with the Divine. To reconcile the quest for the transcendent and for self-transcendence with the love and respect for all life which is evident in most of the Indian writings is an ultimate philosophical problem, and it appears in one form or another on almost every page of these volumes—sharpened by the inescapable challenge of the evil in the world and in ourselves confronting the potential good.

To the "Western mind" and especially to Western minds trained to the idolatry of science, Indian thought must appear excessively "mystical" —and mystical in a bad sense. The careful specialists' essays in Volume I should help to make Indian mysticism more intelligible to Western students, especially if they are read in the admirable spirit of toleration in which they are written; and above all to show the continuity in Indian thought between mystical and figurative modes of expression and what in Europe would be regarded as "properly philosophical" ideas. There is a wealth of material here for students of the relations between mysticism and metaphysics, and between philosophy and poetry—to mention only two central topics. But the most important lesson which these Indian writers have to teach the West is the moral one of toleration—especially now when our most authoritarian Church is openly advocating another and more bloody Crusade.

The primary funcion of Volume I is of course to introduce readers—whether Eastern or Western—to the classical texts of Oriental philosophy and to its traditional schools. The learned essays devoted to this task do not make easy reading, but they will amply repay the strenuous effort of attention which they demand. They provide a unique mapping-out of the basic ideas of the Vedas, the Upanishads, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, and the *Vishnu* and *Bhagavata Puranas*. Part III discusses scientific thought in ancient India, recording, *e.g.*, the important Indian contributions to mathematics; it has essays on Indian æsthetics, on Islamic thought, on Sikh philosophy and on contemporary Indian thought. Part IV is devoted to Chinese and Japanese thought; and here most readers will be especially attracted by the accounts of Confucianism and of Chinese Buddhism.

No one, least of all a student trained in the Western tradition, can hope to assimilate the whole of this work easily or at one or two sittings. For many these volumes will function rather as a work of reference. As such they would have been improved by the inclusion of a glossary of technical terms. Perhaps later editions might include such a glossary.

The Introduction to the whole work by the Indian Minister of Education, the Honourable Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who first mooted the project of this publication, is a stimulating and provocative essay on the "Meaning of Philosophy." It concludes with the challenging words (Vol. I, p. 27):—

> The time has now come when philosophy should turn its attention to the problem of human peace. If it succeeds in this quest and rediscovers the peace which man has lost then...it will write a new book for humanity. It will then, in the words of another Persian poet, have the right to say:
>
> Those who follow this path never tire;
> Because it is both the way and the destination.

D. J. McCracken

GULSHAN-I-RAZ

It stands to the glory of Islam that, besides its civilizing influence and its dissemination of the ideal of the unity and "oneness of God without a second," some of its mystic and devout adherents have left behind them priceless mystical treatises which have for centuries proved a source of true inspiration and guidance to many earnest souls struggling on the path of Self-realization. One such profound mystic philosopher was Mahmud Shabistari, whose *Gulshan-i-Raz*, "Rose Garden of Secrets," has brought light and peace to many a weary wayfarer on the Path of God-realization. This priceless gem of mystic lore has had several commentaries which help to make it more intelligible to the average reader or the neophyte.

It was in 1880 that this mystic treatise by Sa'duddin Mahmud Shabistari was rendered into English by E. H. Whinfield, Barrister-at-law, at one time of H. M. Bengal Civil Service.

Some of the Theosophical students of those days considered it a book of great value for aspirants and recommended it to fellow students for careful and profitable study in its English translation. This translation was never reprinted and has become now a rarity. After a long and persistent search I happily discovered a copy and have gleaned some teachings of great mystical and philosophical value from it and its introduction, which should be of benefit to seekers after Truth and earnest aspirants on the Spiritual Path.

The following paragraphs are summaries and may give some idea of its teachings to such readers as are not familiar with the Persian language.

The *Gulshan-i-Raz* was composed in 717 A.H. (A.D. 1317) in answer to 15 questions on the doctrines of the Sufis, propounded by Amir Saiyyad Hosain, a celebrated Sufi doctor of Herat. The author's name was Sa'duddin Mahmud Shabistari, so called from his birthplace, Shabistar, a village near Tabriz in the province of Azarbaijan. From a brief notice of his life in the *Mujalis ul 'Ushshak* (repeated in substance in the *Haft Iklim*, the *Safina-i-Khushgu*, and the *Riaz ush Shu'ara*), it would appear that he was born about the middle of the 7th century of the Hejira (A.D. 1250), and that he died at Tabriz, where he had passed the greater part of his life, in 720 A.H. The only particulars of his life recorded in these *Tazkiras* are that he was devotedly attached to one of his disciples named Shaikh Ibrahim, and that in addition to the *Gulshan-i-Raz* he wrote two other treatises entitled *Hakk ul Yakin* and *Risala-i-Shahid*. No further information as to the circumstances of his life and times is to be found in the poem itself or in the commentaries, but we know from the *Habib us Siyar* and other chronicles that his birth was at about the time of the incursion of the Mongols under Hulaku Khan, the conquest of Persia, Syria and Mesopotamia, and the downfall of the Abbasid caliphs or "Vicars of God."

There are certain elements of correspondence between Islamic and European mysticism which give Sufism its chief interest for European students. Many of the definitions used in Christian mystical theology would do for descriptions of Sufism. The ruling ideas in both systems are very similar. Thus, for instance, we find the Sufis referring to "love to God," to "union with God," to "death to self" and to "life eternal in God," to "the indwelling Spirit in man," to "the nullity of works and ceremonies," to "grace and spiritual illumination" and to the "Logos." Both mystical systems may be characterized as religions of the heart, as opposed to formalism and ritualism. Both exalt the "inner light" at the expense of outward ordinances and the voice of the Church. Both exhibit the same craving for visions, raptures and supernatural exaltations, and have been productive of similar excesses and extravagances. If Sufism

has its *mevalavis* and *Rafa'is* and *Beshara* fakirs, its dancing, howling and antinomian dervishes; so, European mysticism has produced the omphalopsychitic or navel-gazing monks of Mount Athos, the Jansenist "convulsionaries," the Anabaptists of Munster and the Shakers.

It is clear that the Pantheism of the Sufis, at any rate as expounded in the *Gulshan-i-Raz*, must not be confounded with the European Pantheism of the present day—that Pantheism which, in the words of Bossuet, "makes every thing God except God himself." In the *Gulshan-i-Raz* we find a different kind of Pantheism, held conjointly with a theory of a divine personality and the obligations of morality. Mahmud Shabistari's Pantheism is an amplification rather than a minimizing of the idea of Divinity. He had the sense of his own existence, his own freedom, passing away and becoming absorbed in the sense of absolute dependence on an infinite Being. Compared with this omnipresent, infinite, unseen Power—underlying all the phenomena of the universe, dominating man's will, striving in man's heart:—

> Warming in the sun, refreshing in the breeze,
> Glowing in the stars, and blossoming in the trees,

—all outward existence and agencies, whether in man or in the world, seemed to sink into utter nothingness. In fact Mahmud's Pantheism is a corollary of the Muslim doctrine of *jabr*, usually translated predestination; but, more exactly, the impulse to carry out the Divine Will, the universal action of Allah. The same sense and conviction of this irresistible divine impulse and compulsion, which according to their temperaments drives some men into furious and fanatical action and makes others sit down and cry "*kismat*," impels men of a logical turn of mind to regard not only all action but also all that exists in the universe as the direct outcome or manifestation of the Divine energy.

The whole Sufi system follows logically from this fundamental assumption. Sense and reason cannot transcend phenomena or see the real Being which underlies all; so sense and reason must be ignored or superseded by the "inner light," inspiration or divine illumination in the heart, which is the only means by which men may apprehend the Infinite. Thus enlightened men see that the whole external, phenomenal world, including man's "self," is an illusion, non-existent in reality; and, in so far as it is unreal, evil, because a departure from the one real Being. Man's duty is to shake off this illusion, this clog of Not-being, to die to self, and to unite with and live eternally in the one real Being—Truth. In the progress toward this union external observances and outward forms profit little because they keep alive the illusion of duality, of man's self-righteousness; of his personal agency and personal merit; whereas the true course is to ignore all reference to the personal self, to be receptive to Truth that God may work within and the Divine light and grace enter the chamber of the heart and operate in man without impediment, drawing him to Truth and uniting him with the One.

After an exordium laying down the fundamental principle of the sole existence of the one real Being, and of the illusive non-real nature of all phenomenal being, and a short account of the composition of the poem, Mahmud Shabistari proceeds to inquire how men are to gain this essential knowledge of God. The answer commonly given is, by thought. But thought is of two kinds, one logical, reasoning, the other spiritual, illumined. The first is inadequate because sense and reason cannot transcend phenomena and penetrate to the invisible and incomprehensible Being underlying them. They are powerless to shake off the illusion of the apparent reality of the sensible world. This original defect of the lower mental sight, when it alone is used by philosophers and theologians, shows their incapacity to thus apprehend God.

The second part explains that reason, looking at the Light of lights, is blinded by excess of light, like a bat by the sun. This annihilation of the lower mental vision caused by its proximity to the Light of lights—this consciousness of its own inadequacy caused by its approach to Being—is the highest degree of perception which such conditioned being can attain. When the seer attains this state of the annihilation of his phenomenal self, the true light is revealed to him, as a spiritual illumination streaming into his soul.

The phenomenal world is in itself Not-being, wherein are reflected, as in a mirror, the various attributes of Being. By a species of radiation or effluxion of waves of light from Being, each atom of Not-being becomes a reflection of some one divine attribute. These effluent atoms of Being are ever striving to rejoin their source, but so long as their phenomenal extrusion lasts they are held back from reunion with their divine source.

With regard to man, he is the soul of the world—the microcosm. While other creatures reflect only single divine attributes, man reflects them all. He is an epitome of the universe, and so by introspection he may see in himself reflections of all the divine attributes, the fulness of the Godhead. But on the other side he is black with the darkness and evil of Not-being. His object therefore should be to purge away this non-existent, corrupt side of himself, which holds him back from union. And, union once attained, lower thought is no longer possible, for it involves duality.

In the third answer he propounds that to "travel into self" means to journey out of the phenomenal, non-existent self into the real Self, which is one with Truth. This journey has two stages, dying to self and abiding in Truth. When man's phenomenal self is effaced and the real Self alone remains, law has no longer any dominion over him.

In the fourth answer these journeys are called the "journey up to God" and the "journey down from God in God," and are a sort of circuit, and he who completes the circuit is the Perfect Man.

When man is born into the world evil passions spring up in him, and if he gives way to them he is lost. But, if he attends to the promptings of the Divine grace and light in his soul, he repents and is converted and journeys up to God—effacing self-will, false knowledge and his entire phenomenal, corrupt personal self-existence. By purifying his nobler part from the stain of externality, he ascends in spirit to heaven, and is united in spirit with Truth. This stage is the holy state known as saintship, exemplified in saints and prophets.

But the Perfect Man must not pause in this ecstatic union, which is above all laws. Notwithstanding his exaltation he must journey down again to the phenomenal world, in and along with God, and in this downward journey he must conform to outward laws and conditions. His sanctification must bring forth the outward fruit of good works.

Mahmud Shabistari states that the man who knows this secret—that all things are One—dies to self, and lives, with regenerate heart, in God. He sweeps away all that comes between God and the soul and breaks through to the oneness, as Eckhart said. Good works, it is true, raise men to a "laudable station," but so long as division and duality and "self" remain, complete and permanent, true, mystical union of God and man is not attained.

But if man and God be one, how comes it that man feels within him emotions of love and aspiration drawing him towards God? In man's present phenomenal state, the mixture of Not-being in him divides him from Being; and these aspirations are the stirrings of the true Being within him, recalling and drawing him as with a magnet to his source. If he be not of those who are born blind to this spir-

itual light within, these sparks kindle up the flame of love to God, which burns up his phenomenal self, and shows him his real Self one with Truth.

The man who, like Mansur Hallaj, the wool-carder, has carded away his phenomenal self, can say: "I am the Truth"; for when man assumes his eternal nature the other, *i.e.*, Not-being, is annihilated, and nothing is left but Being. When God withdraws what belongs to Him all things fall back into their original nothingness. All phenomenal existence is merely an illusion, as may be illustrated by echoes, reflections, past and future time, and fleeting accidents, whereof, it is said, the externality or objectivity of substance consists.

It is then answered that the creature state being thus non-existent, man cannot of himself move, draw near to, or unite with Truth. Union is only a word for annihilating the phenomenal element in man—sweeping off the dust of contingent being. The genesis of the creature world is an eternal process. It is as a drop of water raised from the sea of Being in mist, poured down in rain, converted into plants, animals, man and finally recalled into the bosom of the sea. Phenomena are constantly annihilated in the universal Noumenon, and this annihilation is union.

Mahmud further says that the illusion of free will is Magianism, setting up an evil first cause, Ahriman, over against the good, Ormuzd. This illusion must be shaken off and annihilated by the conviction that the only free agent is Truth and man a passive instrument in God's hands, and absolutely dependent on His pleasure. Man's glory lies in abandoning his self-will, and finding his true will in God's will.

Going back to the relation of the law to the state of sanctification, in the fourth answer called Truth, and here called "the knowledge of faith," Mahmud compares the former to the shell and the latter to the pearl within it. The Sufi must extract this pearl; but he must not break the shell till the pearl within it is fully formed. The law is the schoolmaster to bring him to Truth. Without this faith, this fixed spiritual attitude, this settled internal character, or state of the heart, no external works, however lawful, are virtuous in the highest sense. Lawful and formal works cannot sanctify man; it is the saintly disposition which sanctifies works. From this disposition all the virtues flow spontaneously. All the virtues lie in the mean, in equipoise and harmony, and this harmony of the soul calls down and attracts the Spirit from above. This heavenly Spirit operates in man like the sun's beams on the earth. Enamoured, as it were, of the harmonious soul, the Spirit enters into a mystical marriage or union with it, the issue of which are gracefulness, virtue and the beauty of holiness. But all these are not of man who worketh, but of God that giveth grace.

In the 11th answer Mahmud says: Absolute Being is the *summum genus* embracing all being. But in one sense actual phenomenal being is wider, because it is absolute plus phenomenal limited being. This phenomenal side is renewed every moment, as indicated by the texts about "the new creation." Similarly the texts about "the resurrection and world to come" indicate that the dispositions acquired by men in this life will then be manifested in "spiritual bodies," *i.e.*, forms appropriate to them. The Perfect will then drink the "pure wine" of union with God. There will remain no duality or distinction of persons. Hence faith, reason, devotion, paradise and *houris* will become an empty tale. Such will be the perfect Union in the world to come; but in this world all ecstatic union is followed by sobriety and separation.

Mahmud concludes this part of the discussion by reiterating his main thesis that all things are One. The Eternal and the temporal are not two distinct entities, since the temporal is merely a subjective illusion, like the circle of fire seen when a single spark of fire is rapidly whirled round.

The last three sections are devoted to an explanation of the figurative language in which the Sufis express their conceptions of God and the universe, and their ecstatic experiences. Although this language seems irreverent and unseemly to us now, it did not seem so to them then. Symbols that we see as inadequate and misleading were, not improbably, the highest conceivable by the minds of other ages and countries, and thus possessed, perhaps, a relative goodness of their own. The last answer shows us that one of the main characteristics of the Sufis was their readiness to recognize and appreciate whatever seemed to them to be good and true in other religions: Christianity, Magianism, and even Idolatry; and there is high authority (if authority be needed) for thinking it not inconsistent with our loyalty to our own religion to mete out similar tolerance to them.

M. HAFIZ SYED

The Holy Koran: An Introduction with Selections. By A. J. ARBERRY. (Ethical and Religious Classics of East and West, No. 9. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 141 pp. 1953. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

This is a most useful book. Indeed it may well prove to be a significant one, for on its reception depends to some extent whether we are to have a further English version of the *Koran*. None could be better fitted to undertake so immense a task than Professor Arberry, whose many valuable writings and profound scholarship have helped us to gain a better understanding of the Islamic world. It will therefore profit the readers of this book, and I hope they may be many, to study *very* carefully what the author has to say in his General Introduction. He has put forward a most fair and generous interpretation. He has tried to resolve a paradox familiar enough but hitherto most baffling to any earnest student—why has the *Koran* been received by some learned men with enthusiasm, nay, with tears and ecstasy, and brushed aside by others as a dull and jumbled compilation? Moreover, he has brought together, in a most fascinating way and in concise form, a host of interesting facts and opinions relevant to the subject of the *Koran*.

It is because I believe that Professor Arberry has found the answer to the paradox that I venture to anticipate the reader, without, however, intending to blunt the pleasure of his or her first reading, by commenting very briefly upon the assertion that hitherto we have not been sufficiently advised *how* to read the *Koran*. So in his attempt to make the message of the *Koran* clearer, Professor Arberry seeks to preserve as far as possible throughout the 71 translations which he offers, "the emotive and evocative qualities of the original," and he does this by a careful analysis of the stress patterns and the rhythms of the spoken Arabic.

It is impossible for most of us to reach the heart of a symphony by reading the score, still less by a physical and mathematical analysis of the music in terms of frequencies and ratios of chords, for we attain full appreciation only by seeing and hearing the orchestra; how much more difficult then to comprehend in *written* English a message held by nearly four hundred millions of the Islamic peoples as a divine revelation? That Professor Arberry should have attempted to cross this barrier by a new approach is in itself an event worthy of note. Like all experiments, it will be judged by its results. I hope the reader, in making up his mind about it, will enjoy reading Professor Arberry's book as much as I have.

H. J. J. WINTER

Sanskrit in Indonesia. By J. GONDA. (Sarasvati Vihara Series, International Academy of Indian Culture, Nagpur. xii + 456 pp. 1952. Rs. 30/-)

Great indeed is the gift that the Dutch savant, Dr. J. Gonda (pronounced Khonda, "Kh" as in the Persian "Khan"), Professor of Sanskrit and Indonesian Linguistics, in the University of Utrecht, Holland, has given to the peoples of India and Indonesia in this monumental work. Ever since the advent of political freedom in India, scholars have been exerting themselves for the revival of Sanskrit. People have, in that process, been made aware, vaguely and generally, of the pre-eminent rôle that this divine language played in the eastward expansion of the Indo-Aryan culture during the early centuries of the Christian era. It was, however, left to Professor Gonda to present a complete picture, with facts and figures. A proper evaluation of his contribution is possible only to an expert philologist. There is at present hardly a scholar, either in India or in Indonesia, who could have done justice to the subject. The appearance of Professor Gonda's work at this juncture is thus doubly welcome. It is bound to serve generations of scholars as a manual in its special field of research.

Though meant mainly for the specialist, the book contains much to interest the general reader as well. There is a parallelism between Latin and Sanskrit. Latin served as medium for the spread of the Roman civilization in the Western world and influenced the original languages of France, Spain and many other countries, giving birth in Europe to what we call the Romance languages. Similarly Sanskrit served as vehicle for the diffusion of Aryan culture in the Indonesian Archipelago and permeated the various original languages of many of the islands in the Far East. An idea of the enormous area covered can be gained from the Linguistic Map of Indonesia at the beginning of the book. There are as many as 16 groups, of which the Philippine Group alone comprises 17 different languages. The total number of languages and dialects bearing the stamp of Sanskrit influence, direct or indirect, exceeds 100.

The work is divided into six sections, followed by two appendices and three indices. The following few titles and sub-titles may give an idea of the contents: "The Ancient Connections between India and Indonesia"; "How Did Sanskrit Reach Indonesia?" "Indian Alphabets in Indonesia"; "The Infiltration of Sanskrit through the Medium of Learning and Written Texts"; "Religion and Mysticism in General"; "Outward Appearance of the Borrowed Words"; "The Reaction of the Indonesian Languages to the Influence of Sanskrit."

"It is a remarkable fact that the Indian sources of information about the ancient Hindu colonization in the Archipelago are rather scanty." (p. 18) There is, however, a vast amount of internal data, which has made the present linguistic survey possible. Java, Sumatra, Bali and Borneo have yielded a goodly number of inscriptions, dating from the 4th century onwards. The earliest of them are in Sanskrit; later the indigenous idioms, influenced by and even interspersed with Sanskrit, make their appearance. Java and Bali have even yielded in vast numbers literary works that are translations and adaptations from the original Sanskrit texts as they existed in India. All these varied data, coupled with the evidence afforded by the modern languages, have been properly utilized by the author in producing this masterly treatise.

B. CH. CHHABRA

The Great Enterprise: Relating Ourselves to Our World. By H. A. OVERSTREET. (Victor Gollancz Ltd., London. 332 pp. 1953. 13*s.* 6*d.*)

This book, like its predecessor, *The Mature Mind*, is a study of the ways in which we may conform to reality and grow into it and of the obstacles which prevent or delay our doing so. In Part One Dr. Overstreet is primarily concerned with what he calls "the basic psychological equipment that the individual needs for the maturing of his social self." This includes a true self-image and true images of others, an escape from the egocentric trap into relationship, a right conception and experience of authority, a creative sense of human potentiality and, above all, a ready response to life. In Part Two he turns to the tense world of today, which both reflects and exacerbates the neuroticism so prevalent in the individual, yet which is, also, in some of its aspects and particularly, he suggests, in the maturing outlook of enlightened scientists, and even in the religious field, coming closer to underlying spiritual and human values. The last chapters of the book, which deal with Communism and with anti-Communist panic in the United States, are addressed to American readers, though the psychological causes of that panic are at work less violently elsewhere. Like all contemporary psychologists Dr. Overstreet attributes all distortions or arrests in an individual's growth to family and social environment. That some of them may have deeper roots in the individual himself, he seems to overlook. Similarly his constant emphasis is on the need to go out from the self. Life at its best, he truly says, is a "tissue of life." "The wider the ramifications and connections, the richer and stronger the tissue. Thus to grow outward is to grow richly and strongly inward." But the opposite is also true and no less necessary. In his chapter on "Living on the Spiritual Frontier" he does come near to admitting this, but for him inwardness is less a deepening of the truth-seeking mind than a threat to the fellowship that grows out of doing things together. But apart from a tendency to over emphasis in this direction his book is a very wise and relevant study of the human situation today and one which most helpfully answers the crucial question, how we can encourage love and diminish hate.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

Challenge of the Unknown: Exploring the Psychic World. By LOUIS K. ANSPACHER; Introduction by WALDEMAR KAEMPFFERT. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 331 pp. 1952. 16*s.*)

Dr. Louis K. Anspacher was a pupil and friend of Dr. James H. Hyslop, who had a great deal to do with the shaping of the American Society for Psychical Research in its earlier years. The book is concerned with the challenge of the psychic world. Unfortunately, it wavers between the phenomenology and the philosophy of *l' inconnu*; between the attempt to silence the noisy sceptic and the attempt to satisfy the more serious student. Perhaps Dr. Anspacher's real intentions lay in the latter direction, notwithstanding the two parts of the book entitled "Techniques of Approach" and "The Present Verdict of Science on Psychic Manifestation." He seeks to establish the reality of a "subliminal faculty in man emerging in genius, poetry, plastic art, drama, music and philosophy."

The many quotations from poets and artists would have gained depth and significance if Dr. Anspacher had contested the theory, propounded by a philosopher like Hans Larsson, that poetic intuition is a "more severe application of logic" than ordinary thinking and examined the claim lodged by the Abbé Henri Bremond in his *La Poésie Pure* and *Prière et Poésie* that much "Pure Poetry" is a mystic magic allied to prayer. In a letter to the Countess Nora Wydenbruck, the poet Rainer Maria Rilke (see his

collected *Letters from Muzot*) pronounced that psychic phenomena appear disturbing or misleading only when we ascribe them to "outside" influences. "He who during poetic creation has been initiated into the incredible marvels of our own depths...must reach a point where amazement becomes a principle of his nature." To Rilke it seemed that his ordinary consciousness was but the apex of a pyramid whose base stretched beyond time and space.

It is a pity that a book like Dr. Anspacher's, aspiring to provide us with the outlines of a psychic philosophy, should confine itself to Greek and European traditions in the narrower sense and neglect Oriental mysticism, in which the conviction of states where "death is almost a laughable impossibility" is no mere conviction but the Verity of all verities. Dr. Anspacher says little or nothing about Eastern Occult traditions and even about *Ostkirche und Mystik*: the mysticism of the Eastern Church which suffuses its liturgies and sacraments. Yet the author has not failed to convey to his readers something of the wisdom of Lamartine's lines which he has quoted:

Croire tout decouvert est une erreur profonde,
C'est prendre l'horizon pour les bornes du monde.

One must not mistake the horizon for the limits of the world.

C. T. K. CHARI

The Brain: The Statement of Royal Mallison Eberhardt, Major, I. S. Army (Retd.). By MICHAEL HARRISON. (Cassell and Co., Ltd., London. 287 pp. 1953. 10*s.* 6*d.*)

This is a strange but very interesting book, for it might be classified as Science Fiction in almost the wildest sense, yet it is surrounded by a thin layer of "Atoms" and philosophy. Michael Harrison, as is to be expected, has given us a magnificent piece of writing although one might wish that he had decided to present his thoughts through the medium of a more simple novel.

Why, for instance, do we need to know of the hero's wanderings into amorous adventure other than as a vehicle for the divided personality so common in a professional soldier? These experiences seem to have little place in a tale of adventure which borders upon the fantastic.

Here is a scientist who decides that atom bombs have been tried everywhere except underground. A mine shaft, with a background of haunted mystery, is chosen for the experiment, with the result that fission takes an unknown form and results in the production of a vast brain that is a projection of the personality of the chief character.

A top secret member of the "Intelligence" remembers that the atom bomb has been detonated in the air, on the ground, and under water. He is fascinated by the alarming thought that, deep in the earth, effects might be quite different. Very soon he finds himself suspected of pre-knowledge of what may happen when a superhuman brain is formed by a change of energy to matter. The result is an excursion into the realms of the International Spy with communication to earth by a thought-machine developed far beyond that of the human cerebellum. No one explains why so physical a thing as a self-nourishing brain should be wanted and synthesized for the transmission of percepted thought.

Queer? Yes, very strange, for extra-sensory perception is the mildest of these results. Yet physical entity is insisted upon by the mere shape of the "mushroom." With all this to swallow it remains a fine book. Thoughtful, deeply imaginative, and even educational to those who wish to read between the lines of power politics. It is written in a simple style and is thoroughly good entertainment.

A. M. Low

Memoirs of a Vagrant Soul, or, The Pitted Face. By MIKHAIL NAIMY. (Philosophical Library, Inc., New York. 148 pp. 1952. $2.75)

Admirers of *The Book of Mirdad* from the same author's pen will open these *Memoirs of a Vagrant Soul* in confident expectation of a spiritual feast. They will not be disappointed. Though the scene is laid in an obscure Syrian coffee-house in lower Manhattan instead of on the mysterious mountain of the earlier work, he who pens these reflections is the same true mystic who has perhaps even gained in depth of insight and breadth of sympathy. The sympathy between him and his close friend Kahlil Gibran must have been profound indeed.

These *Memoirs* written "From Myself to Myself" are supposed to have been found after the final disappearance of the coffee-house proprietor's silent Lebanese servant, "Pitted Face," with his mercifully forgotten tragic past and his impliedly tragic end. No brief review could do justice to their profundity and pertinence. They breathe both aspiration and detachment, like the *Dhammapada's* "single word full of meaning, on hearing which one is at peace."

The silent "Pitted Face" marvels at the garrulity of men, whom nothing oppresses "so much as to be silent and meditate. How, then, do they hope to find God in themselves?"

Pacifists will find an ally in the man who "would not be tricked away" from his "fight with a stubborn enemy within by enemies without, too weak to deserve a blow, or even a word." Believers that thoughts, emotions and deeds bring their appropriate reactions will find here confirmation of their faith. And Death, in a striking dialogue with "Pitted Face," explains that he "folds and unfolds" the living, time and again, until they learn that nothing subject to change can be lasting and that the lasting cannot be subject to change.

Depth and profound suggestiveness mark even "Pitted Face's" reflections upon homely subjects, but the spirit of the writer can perhaps best be judged from what he writes of the stumbles of the Seeker of Perfection:—

> Nothing is so unpalatable to men as to see one of their own kind break out of their cages and soar away beyond their reach. And nothing gratifies them more than to see that man struck down and forced to crawl back into the cage....
>
> Where I,—the man so obscure and so insignificant,—each time I hear of a man straining after Perfection I wish I could make of my heart a carpet for his feet, and of my soul a fence for his soul. For the perfection of a single man is a surety for me and for all men of ultimate perfection.

This is a beautiful and richly rewarding book.

E. M. H.

Sri Krishna: the Darling of Humanity. By A. S. P. AYYAR. (The Madras Law Journal Office, Mylapore, Madras. 451 pp. 1952. Rs. 4/- or 6s.)

The prolific pen of the author has now given us one more book, to serve as a companion volume to his *A Layman's Bhagavad-Gita.* In it he has narrated the incidents of Sri Krishna's life, culled from the *Bhagavata,* the *Mahabharata* and the *Vishnu Purana* and from folklore, together with an exposition of His teachings in a simple style, supplemented with pertinent parallel quotations. It is a good book to place in the hands of parents and educators for enabling the young and the layman to assimilate the true spirit of Hinduism.

M. G.

Francis Younghusband: Explorer and Mystic. By GEORGE SEAVER. (John Murray, London. 391 pp. Illustrated. 1952. 25*s.*)

The late Sir Francis Younghusband in the early years of his life as a soldier, an explorer and a political agent hardly seemed to be moving in a religious direction. He was essentially a man of action, inspired by patriotism and brought up in the Victorian belief that Britain was specially endowed by God to lead the nations to a higher life.

His daring feats of exploration in the vast and lonely regions of Asia, which brought him into close personal fellowship with men of many different religions, had the effect of feeding the smouldering spiritual fires within him. Younghusband found much of such fuel far from the centre of his own civilization, trudging through the desolate but awe-inspiring regions of Central Asia, skirting the Himalayas, marching across Tibet. He was acutely sensitive to natural beauty, even when the task in hand was to report on the extent of Russian infiltration into Afghanistan, discover a pass in the Himalayas that would be strategically useful, or to cross the thousand miles of the Gobi Desert.

The spiritual development of this great English explorer is what makes his life enduringly interesting. In this book, we see how his spiritual awareness grew and was enriched from his life of action with every enterprise and adventure which he undertook.

This account is not a critical study but a portrait, largely painted with materials left by Younghusband himself. As a thinker and religious explorer, Younghusband, in his later years, was far ahead of his time and he found the expansiveness and depth of his spiritual feelings, cramped and crippled by the formalism and rigidity of the leaders of Churchianity. Both in the world of action and in the world of the spirit he knew that the key to a richer life was understanding and toleration. There is unity in diversity and, looking round the world, today we see that this key is still there, waiting to be inserted into the lock.

SUNDER KABADI

The Relationship between Psychology and Science. By WILLIAM TAYLOR. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 244 pp. 1952. 12*s.* 6*d.*)

The early decades of the century saw the attempts of mathematical physicists at bridging the gulf between metaphysics and science. Few of these attempts, however, were successful, because it is exceedingly difficult to throw a single-span bridge across the vast distance that separates the two disciplines. Prof. Taylor has made the task easier by creating a resting place midway. He proposes to span the distance between science and psychology in the first instance. This monograph is a penetrating and scholarly study of the vexed problem of the relationship between mind and matter which professional philosophers have failed to solve. The author essays a fresh solution of the problem by a bold hypothesis which links up the external or "objective" world with the internal world of experience. This link is further strengthened by the parallelism which the author seeks to establish between the three prime psychological factors of volition, intellect and emotion and the three physical forces of electricity, magnetism and mesonism (the force derived from mesons, which are intermediate in mass between electrons and atoms). The author develops his hypothesis with insight, and works out its bearings on our ethical, political and theological concepts. The book is not easy reading by any means, as it deals with the no-man's land lying between the highly specialized sciences and philosophy. But students of the special sciences as well as of metaphysics who can manage to shed their exclusiveness and apply their minds to the unusual task that the

author sets them will reap an unusually rich harvest. The vision of a hitherto hidden world of knowledge is opened up by *The Relationship between Psychology and Science.*

P. S. NAIDU

The Feast of Unreason. By HECTOR HAWTON. (C. A. Watts & Co., London, 236 pp. 1952. 15s.)

This book, with an arresting title, is a sustained attack on Existentialism and the author goes the whole hog in his attack. Usually a philosopher is not as absurd as his critics may paint him: and after going through Mr. Hawton's book one wonders whether he has really tried to understand the philosophy he attacks or whether he is only able to see the dark and ugly spots which effectually convict it of being absurd. The book would have gained in value if Mr. Hawton had tried to present Existentialism as fairly as he could and then proceeded to criticize it to his heart's content as a feast of unreason. It has to be admitted that Existentialism, in spite of its being a century old, has something shallow in it. No philosophy can exalt absurdity to a high status and escape itself becoming absurd. Moreover it suffers from an inner contradiction: Kierkegaard takes refuge in the concept of God, though he repudiates any rational account of it; whereas Sartre, who has received much attention as the greatest living exponent of Existentialism, is led to a total denial of God!

A system that can uphold both theistic and atheistic teachings at the same time can only be the result of confused thought, which invariably results in confused language. The surprising thing about Existentialism is that it should have so many followers at the present day. This can only be explained by the hypothesis that the present generation has lost its capacity to think and is in the grip of decadence. Mr. Hawton's book may be of some use to those who are prepared to think and rise above the frustration and *ennui* that mark so many people who look upon life as a superfluity and cannot make up their minds whether to live or to die. It would be tragic indeed if we had to say with Sartre: " ...we are Jansenists because the age has made us such." Mr. Hawton's humanism is more robust as it holds out a hope that, however bad we are, we can always make ourselves better.

A. R. WADIA

Man: The Unruly Child. By CYRIL SCOTT. (The Aquarian Press, London. 97 pp. 1953. 4s.)

This useful little book of commonsense " home truths " is not " occult " in any way. Its theme is that mankind, without realizing it, reproduces in its political, social and economic relations all the least pleasing characteristics of childhood—the worst nursery and playground behaviour, in fact: greediness, bullying, destructiveness and love of " kicking up a row "; vanity, sneaking, lying, gullibility; blind hero-worship and mimicry, competition, jealousy, cruelty and so on. The book is written in popular style, so that even those whose level of reading goes no further than that of the evening newspapers could, without difficulty, look at themselves in the mirror provided. Self-examination is at least one step towards growing up. And those who have—as Mr. Scott points out—a schoolboy aversion to deeper ideals like Brotherhood, as being " sloppy, " should still be able to respond to the easy manner in which the book is written.

E. W.

Women in the Vedic Age. By SHAKUNTALA RAO SHASTRI. (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. 172 pp. 1952. Re. 1/12)

The *Rig Veda,* though a literary monument of the hoary past, offers little material about women's position. The eighth hymn, describing the pressing of Soma juice and the gathering of the sacred grass for sacrifice, gives a glimpse of the complete harmony of married couples in their domestic life and of women who shared their husbands' burden in religious ceremonies. A hymn in the 10th *Mandala* refers to co-wives, but there is no reference to them in any other *Mandala.* This fact, as well as the language of the few references to polygamy being more akin to later Sanskrit than to the Vedic, convinces the author that polygamy cannot have been general in the early Vedic days.

Although the birth of a girl was not considered inauspicious, prayers were offered for the birth of a son. A daughter who was the only child of a family performed her father's funeral rites and became his rightful heir but was not considered eligible for marriage and the later lawgivers strictly prohibited her marrying. Woman's freedom and position in society are evident from the description of a popular festival called *Samana,* when men and women gathered and mixed freely. Usha's praise must have been composed to depict a maiden and her freedom before marriage.

There is no indication as to child marriage, which was not compulsory for a woman as testified by women *rishis,* Apala, Atriyi and others. In the Prajapatya marriage, performed by rituals, the bridegroom, taking the bride's right hand, uttered a verse: "I take thy hand for good fortune, that thou mayest attain old age with me, thy husband,...the master of a household." The bride then reigned supreme in her new home. The eldest son's wife looked after everyone in the house but no reference is made to her legal position as a wife.

The *Atharva-Vedic* period, dominated by charms and incantations, had much in common with that of the *Rig Veda.* The birth of a daughter was deprecated and prayers were offered to prevent it. Marriage was imperative for a girl and no age restriction prevailed. References to mutual love before marriage indicate the non-existence of child marriage. Husband and wife constituted one unit in society. Polygamy was then prevalent, as is indicated by hymns chanted by a wife to destroy her rival. The burning of widows had become extinct. Their remarriage was permissible.

Brahmanical texts state that a wife was indispensable at sacrifices but she was forbidden to attend an assembly. The *Maitravani Samhita* and the *Satapatha Brahamana* rank her as inferior even to a bad man. She had, however, the right of reading holy text and of being initiated before performing sacrifices. Courtesans had a good status.

Out of 150 Upanishads, only the *Chhandogya* and the *Brihadaranyaka* refer to women's being allowed to discuss the highest spiritual truths of life. Gargi's famous discussions with Yajnavalkya contained the noblest expressions uttered by a woman. Maitreyi was another remarkable woman of the period.

The *Mantra Brahmana* gives the marriage ceremonial in a more developed form.

According to the *Shrauta Sutras,* women are not entitled to perform a sacrifice. The Nanaghat Inscription, however, indicates that Naganika performed sacrifices. A Queen of the 18th century issued a grant in her own name.

The *Grihya Sutras* deal with rituals beneficial to a home.

The learned author has undoubtedly made a deep study of the Vedas and her book, which says a great deal for her erudition, should be invaluable to students of the Vedic period.

KSHAMA ROW

The Shashtishatak Prakaran of Nemichandra Bhandari with Three Commentaries. Edited by BHOGILAL SANDESARA, M.A., PH.D. (Prachin Gurjar Granthmala, Maharaja Sayajirao Univeriity, Baroda. 223 pp. 1953. Rs. 5/-)

Written in Prakrit by Nemichandra Bhandari, a Jain *Shravaka* of Marot (Marwar—Rajasthan) who flourished in the 13th century of the Vikram Samvat era, *Shashtishatak Prakaran* is a small but useful treatise in poetry for students of religion and philosophy. Because it contains 160 *gathas* it is called *Shashtishatak.* A short Jain poetical work in Prakrit on religion or philosophy is called a *prakaran.* The *Prakaran* contains religious and ethical essays in *gathas* easy to memorize.

The main topic is *Samyaktva* (true understanding), to which humility, knowledge, discrimination and resignation lead and which, once achieved and practised, leads to the liberation of the soul from *Karmas.* With great difficulty one acquires the life of a *Manushya* (man) in which alone it is possible to acquire *Mukti,* provided one gets proper opportunities of place, time, true religion, correct mental attitude, health and direction.

The work is remarkable for containing translations, notes and commentaries on the original text by three eminent contemporary Jain scholars—two *Acharyas* and one *Upadhya.* These are in old Gujarati but in Devanāgari script, in the Jain literary fashion. The commentators are: Sri Somasundarsūri, Sri Jinsāgarsūri, and Sri Merusundar, whose learned commentaries convey the correct and full meaning. Their idea is to give, not literary enjoyment, but knowledge of the original work. The style is simple, though not devoid of literary beauty.

The work is useful for the comparative and critical study of different interpretations of the same words as also of variations in the language of the period.

Dr. B. J. Sandesara used in editing four hand-written MSS. of the original text, all preserved in the Sri Hemchandracharya Gnanmandir of Patan. The editor has included two other short compositions of Sri Nemichandra Bhandari. The glossary will be very useful for comparative study of old Gujarati and its old sister languages.

S. K. JHAVERI

Bridge to Islām: A Study of the Religious Forces of Islām and Christianity in the Near East. By ERICH W. BETHMANN. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 240 pp. 1953. 15*s.*)

This book was written by an American missionary after living some 20 years in the Middle East, and is intended primarily for the instruction of Christians who will be residing in Muslim countries. The author gives a rapid sketch of the meaning and history of Islam; then he summarizes the situation today in the various countries of the Middle East, from Egypt to Persia. The book is written in a lively and interesting style, and is based not only upon long personal experience but also upon wide and discriminating reading. It contains a very extensive bibliography.

Though the author does not conceal that his primary interest is to win converts to Christ, his argument has nothing of the intolerance and misrepresentation which characterized so much of the old missionary literature. Mr. Bethmann writes with humble sincerity, and there is little in his book to offend.

A. J. ARBERRY

Sri Aurobindo Came to Me. By DILIP KUMAR ROY. (Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry. 556 pp. 1952. Rs. 6/-)

The author calls this more a reminiscence than an autobiography—reminiscences of his discipleship to Sri Aurobindo from 1928 to 1950. While maintaining a rigid aloofness in regard to personal meetings with his numerous disciples, Sri Aurobindo nevertheless gave them individual guidance through frequent and sometimes almost daily letters. Shri Roy gives extracts from a number of letters written to him by the great *Guru* in response to his doubts and queries arising from his *sadhana* as a *yogic* aspirant. They afford vivid and authentic glimpses of the wisdom of Sri Aurobindo on some of the most vital problems of philosophy and religion. They reveal him as a man of vision and experience, the exponent of a unique synthesis of the best elements of the Indian spiritual heritage with the best values of the Humanism associated with the West today. They reveal him also as a *yogi* who was prepared to use his higher powers (*siddhis*) to assist his disciples. For example, an instance is cited of his psychic intervention having saved two people from drowning.

The work gives interesting glimpses of the Ashram that grew around Sri Aurobindo and his co-worker, usually called "the Mother." Shri Roy adds arresting and appealing vignettes of some of the other leading members of the Ashram, *e g.*, the poet K. D. Sethna, and the late Mr. Chadwick, and a very understanding account of Sri Krishna Prem. It is a valuable addition to the growing Aurobindo literature from a direct disciple endowed with many gifts: music, poetry, philosophic insight and spiritual aspiration.

M. A. VENKATA RAO

A Doctor's Soliloquy. By JOSEPH HAYYIM KRIMSKY. (Philosophical Library, New York. 116 pp. 1953. $2.75)

The author, a physician, has been a spiritually-minded student of modern science and human nature with the result that he ends his volume:—

> The cure of a sick, corrupt, decaying and disintegrating culture is lodged in the restoration and renewal, in the spiritual rehabilitation and moral regeneration of every individual soul.

This is surely true, but for its accomplishment Dr. Krimsky offers only "the practice of Ethical Religion." He sees in the similar ethics of all great religions "the binding force to tie all men together..." But alas! men have had these ethics for ages and are not yet united in a conscious, soul-saving Brotherhood!

Dr. Krimsky has also, however, intuitively recognized that a "scientific foundation for promulgated ethics" is necessary for modern man. This is what makes his book valuable and inspiring as far as it goes with the materials he has used. He glimpses the truth of what H. P. Blavatsky wrote at the close of the last century:—

> Humanity is a great Brotherhood by virtue of the sameness of the material from which it is formed physically and morally. Unless, however, it becomes a Brotherhood also intellectually, it is no better than a superior genus of animals...

But modern science fails him and he has to exhort men to faith and hope long before the outposts of possible knowledge are reached.

At the entrance of "that other world" is the Scientific Religion for mankind, named Theosophy by its recorder, H. P. Blavatsky. From its simple but profound universal Principles may be won the rational answers that Dr. Krimsky seeks; especially on the immortality of the human Soul.

E. P. T.

CORRESPONDENCE

ELLEN HORUP

A passionate friend of India—therefore a great pacifist—has just died, at the age of 81: the well known Danish author, Ellen Horup. A gifted writer, deep thinker and ardent social worker, she ignored fear and, till the end, served Truth. Daughter of Viggo Horup, editor of the Danish paper, *Politiken,* she herself was an intense and lively journalist, in the highest sense of the word; her articles reveal the broadness of her outlook, the straightforwardness of her mind. "I've never written anything that was not meant to help those who are unjustly treated," she said. Her great friend Anker Kirkeby wrote about her when she died, revealing the manifold aspects of that rare personality and her incredibly numerous activities; young till the very end, she was never tired of helping others. A strict vegetarian, living mostly on milk and salads, she nevertheless was a reservoir of physical strength. A few years ago, she sought for our out-of-the-way home; walked several hours without finding it; came back next morning, fresh and lovely: snow-white hair, serene face, humorous smile, and dressed in an original tunic of "pashmina" embroidered in Kashmir. She insisted on going back to town on foot carrying our heavy typewriter. She needed it for an urgent article about some oppressed people, race or caste, whom she wanted to defend, though she was just staying a few days in Provence.

From 1931 to 1938 she was secretary to the "International Comity for India"; she wrote and published a monthly leaflet of news concerning India; not asking for subscribers, she sent it herself to all the Europeans interested in India and hoping for her liberation. She went twice to India, in order to "kneel at the Mahatma's feet." She had travelled round the world, she said, in order to find the man who possessed "the store of wisdom" and whose greatest aim in life was Peace. She wrote articles about him, and gave many lectures. One of her finest books is *Gandhi's India.* Like all pioneers she was often misunderstood, threatened, calumniated, but she had adopted for her struggles the motto: "*Malgré-Tout*" (In spite of all). That motto became the title of her last booklet. She worked and struggled till the very end, her life having been illuminated, her convictions strengthened, her hopes and ideals fulfilled, by that meeting with the Mahatma.

Many orientalists, many friends of India, have departed lately—Alfred Foucher, Jules Bloch, Jean Buhot... Ellen Horup was not what one calls an "orientalist," but a greater friend or admirer of India cannot be found in the northern countries.

ANDREE and ADALRIK HOGMAN-KARPELES

"INTELLIGENCE TESTS AND MORAL WORTH"

I have read with great interest Miss Elizabeth Cross's article, "Intelligence Tests and Moral Worth" and fully agree with her that intelligence tests do not measure moral worth. I would go a step further and ask whether these tests even successfully measure intelligence itself. Over 20 years ago I spoke on the subject and I venture to send a reprint of my remarks.[1]

Even after 20 years and more I see no reason to modify my views. My

[1] The address was published in the *Mysore University Magazine,* December 1929.—ED.

main criticism of intelligence tests is that they look upon human children as if they were static entities and do not appreciate the fact that children grow not merely in size but mentally. Any teacher can say how many of his pupils that appeared to be so clever at one stage in their educational career were not able to cope with more advanced studies and had to drop off, or stagnated. Conversely, students who were rather dull developed marvellously later in life. There is the case of Mr. Justice Ranade, who was looked upon as a backward child at school but turned out to be one of the finest brains that Victorian India produced and rose to great heights as a lawyer, social reformer and politician. There is the case again of the present President of the U.S.A., Mr. Eisenhower, whose school record held no promise of his wonderful later career. It is impossible to overlook the fact that children do grow in their mental capacities and what may be true of them at one stage of their growth need not be true of them later. That is why intelligence tests may tend to mar the career of many children.

I referred in my address to Professor Spearman's admission of a distinction between general and specific abilities, which left the concept of "intelligence" as obscure as ever. Also, the "fool-proof" tests devised by Ballard and Spearman palpably set a premium on quickness of response; but such quickness does not always go hand in hand with depth of thought. That is why to my knowledge many eminent persons, including thinkers of high repute, have not emerged very successfully from these so-called tests of intelligence.

I fully agree with Miss Cross that in the long run character (*i.e.*, the moral principles which actuate a man's life) is far more important than mere intellect, and a community that emphasizes mere intelligence at the expense of character can do so only at the risk of undoing itself.

A. R. WADIA

FOUR FUNDMANTAL ASPIRATIONS

In 1952, Shri K. Balasubramania Aiyar delivered two lectures on the subject, "The Fundamental Aspirations Of Man According To Indian Thought" under the auspices of the Dewan Bahadur K. Krishnaswami Rao Lectureship Endowment. These lectures are now published in book form by the Kuppuswami Sastri Institute, Madras.

There are four "Purusharthas" or fundamental aspirations of man according to Indian thought, namely, Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Mr. Aiyar discusses each of these and their interrelationship with reference to original sources ranging from the Vedas to the Kavya literature.

Dharma is a word of protean significance but in this context it means "observance in action of truth." A true dharmist is a compassionate being guided by values (virtues) such as charity, humility and discipline. Artha means wealth, while Kama means desire. But the acquisition and enjoyment of wealth as well as the joys of life are permitted so long as they comply with the dictates of Dharma, for "devoid of Dharma they (men) become equal to animals." Hence Artha and Kama are desirable but Dharma controls them. Moksha is the kingdom of God, while Dharma is the kingdom of God on earth. Moksha means liberation from worldly shackles and from the wheel of rebirth and it results from the extinction of ignorance or Avidya. It is the supreme goal of human aspiration, the lodestar of all human efforts.

M.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

" _____ *ends of verse*
And sayings of philosophers."
HUDIBRAS

Students of Theosophy must accord the warmest welcome to any move towards *rapprochement* between the followers of different religions and the promotion of human brotherhood such as that represented by the newly formed Union for the Study of the Great Religions. The initiators of this organization—who include Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Canon C. E. Raven, lately Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University—looking round a distracted world nearly two and a half years ago, felt that the "spiritual vacuum" left by the military, political and economic steps being taken by the various governments, could only be filled by promoting ethical, philosophic, devotional and mystical education and culture on a world-wide scale through the study of the great religions. Inter-religious understanding, they maintained, would alone lead to international peace, for religion in the true sense is a binding force.

First a statement of aims was drawn up and circulated. "The great and richly diverse cultures of East and West" were to be studied and compared, in schools, universities, theological colleges and elsewhere, in their "independence, integrity and fruitful diversity." The move gained influential and wide support from leaders and scholars in the religious and educational spheres, and from well-known public men of diverse nationalities and religions.

Later a memorandum on the constitution and work of a world-wide union for the promotion of religious education and culture was drawn up. It laid down, among other things, that the great civilizations of the past and of the present could not be understood without a proper evaluation of the ethics, philosophy and religion which lie at their core; that the mutual appreciation of East and West is essential for a harmonious and richly diversified world culture; and that the principal object of education is to promote the "virtue and wisdom that are essential alike for the peace of society and the satisfaction of man's reason."

It was shortly discovered that many notable institutions, especially universities, were at work along similar lines; and as encouraging response was forthcoming from all directions and the range of studies undertaken was getting wider and wider, distinguished scholars are being appointed to act as organizing or area secretaries for certain large areas of the world, all interlinked and mutually co-operative. A significant step is that university libraries are being enriched with collections of ethical, philosophical and religious books, and, as new material is also needed, a series is being published under the title *Ethical and Religious Classics of East and West.*

This new Union for the Study of the Great Religions will prove truly successful if it leads its votaries to look to the inspiration within and behind all religions, which, when found, will be recognized as the Wisdom of all time. We hope it will not concern itself with the academic study of creeds and dogmas which are separative.

Every Theosophist, however, must wish this movement well, for its objectives are in line with the second object of the Theosophical Movement which is to promote the study of the fundamental truths recorded in all ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences—and the recognition of the unanimous testimony which they give

to the existence of a common source from which they are derived. The idea of promoting the comparative study of religions is not new. Ever since H. P. Blavatsky launched her mission in 1875 there have been many efforts towards inter-religious *rapprochement* and it can truly be said that the Theosophical Movement paved the way for these. It has done much to open up the spiritual treasures of the ancient East to seekers in both the modern West and East alike.

Asked by what methods she proposed to carry out the Movement's second object, H. P. Blavatsky replied :—

To put into written form correct information upon the various ancient philosophies, traditions, and legends, and disseminate the same in such practicable ways as the translation and publication of original works of value, and extracts from and commentaries upon the same, or the oral instructions of persons learned in their respective departments. (*The Key to Theosophy*, 2nd Indian ed., p. 47)

A study of the religions of the world, if undertaken not for the sake of glorifying one's own pet creed but in the spirit of honest, brotherly and tolerant inquiry, inevitably leads to the perception that no one religion is entitled to an exclusive claim upon truth, and that there is One Universal Religion which is the original fountain from which have sprung many faiths, however polluted and adulterated these may have become later. Thus there exists a community of noble and inspiring ideas which sages and prophets have put forward in every age and in a variety of ways. In order to bring men to mutual consideration on equal terms of the fundamental verities embedded in all religions, it is necessary to break down creedal barriers. It is well in this connection to quote H. P. Blavatsky's words in *Isis Unveiled* (I. 613):—

...the religion of the ancients is the religion of the future. A few centuries more, and there will linger no sectarian beliefs in either of the great religions of humanity. Brahmanism and Buddhism, Christianity and Mahometanism will all disappear before the mighty rush of *facts*.

The "religion of the ancients" is the Wisdom-Religion of all times, from which proceed all the great world religions like the spokes of a wheel from its hub. The farther they go from the centre of fundamental truth, the more they diverge from each other. The only permanent way in which their votaries can get together is by approaching the common centre, *i.e.*, putting aside the superstitions, rites and dogmas that have carried men away from Truth and coming together on the basic and eternal verities, which form the common denominator of unity for men and women around the world. For there can be but one absolute Truth. If it is absolute it must also be omnipresent and universal, and as such must underlie every religious and philosophical system. And each of these systems in its pristine purity teaches but a Way of Life, a Way to Brotherhood.

Theosophy has emphasized time and again that a Hindu will be a better Hindu if he studies the Koran, the Sermon on the Mount, the teachings of the Buddha, of Zoroaster and of the Jewish prophets. And so with the Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Parsis and others. Theosophy goes much further than encouraging the comparative study of religions. It supplies the key for opening up the mines of truth that are to be found in the various world religions, without which they will ever remain incomprehensible.

The stand which Theosophy takes on the subject is made clear by H. P. Blavatsky in the following passage:—

Our examination of the multitudinous religious faiths that mankind, early and late, have professed, most assuredly indicates that they have all been derived from one primitive source. It would seem as if they were all but different modes of expressing the yearning of the imprisoned human soul for intercourse with supernal spheres. As the white ray of light is decomposed by the prism into the various colours of the solar spectrum, so the beam of divine truth, in passing through the *three-sided* prism of man's nature, has been broken up into vari-coloured fragments called RELIGIONS. (*Isis Unveiled*, II. 639)